

NIA

T H E

E P I S T L E S

O F

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

Translated from the Original LATIN,

With EXPLANATORY NOTES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

E D I N B U R G H :

Printed by A. DONALDSON and J. REID.

For ALEX. DONALDSON.

M D C C L X I I.

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THE EDITOR'S PREFACE.

PLINY was born at Comum, now called *Como*, in the duchy of Milan, in Italy, in the reign of Nero, about the 81st year of Rome, and the 62^d of the Christian æra. As to the time of his death, antiquity has given us no information : but it is conjectured, that he died either a little before, or soon after that most excellent emperor Trajan ; that is, about the year of Christ 116.

“ Pliny,” says Mr Melmoth, “ may be considered in these epistles as writing his own memoirs. Every epistle is a kind of historical sketch, wherein we have a view of him in some striking attitude, either of active or contemplative life. And if that were his real design in their publication, he could not, it must be confessed, have taken a more agreeable, nor, perhaps, a more modest method of transmitting himself to posterity. To enter therefore into a detail concerning him, would be only anticipating the author himself, and amusing the reader with a copy, while the original stands before him.

“ The elegance of this author's manner, adds force to the most interesting, at the same time that it enlivens the most common subjects. But the polite and spirited turn of these epistles, is by no means their principal recommendation : they receive a much higher value, as they exhibit one of the most amiable and animating characters in all antiquity. PLINY's whole life seems to have been employed in the exercise of every generous and social affection. To forward modest merit, to encourage ingenious talents, to vindicate oppressed innocence, are some of the glorious purposes to which he devoted his power, his fortune, and his abilities. But how does he rise in our esteem.

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and admiration, when we see him exercising, with a grace that discovers his humanity as well as his politeness, the noblest acts both of public and private munificence, not so much from the abundance of his wealth, as the wisdom of his economy !”

“PLINY,” says the Earl of Orrery, “is a most singular instance of that primitive simplicity, that integrity of manners, and that sweetness of disposition, which must render a man amiable to his contemporaries, and honoured and admired by all posterity. He passed the earlier part of his life in sanguinary, suspicious, unsettled times ; and he afterwards filled employments of the highest dignity and power. The latter situation was no less dangerous than the former. It was open to all the blasts of envy, rancour, and revenge : yet, by the uprightness of his heart, the excellence of his genius, and the exactness of his prudence, joined to that proper humility, which is neither basely servile, nor secretly ambitious, he rode through the storm in great triumph, boldly, prosperously, and unhurt. His most threatening hazards proceeded from his strict friendships, and firm affections to all those whom he honoured with his esteem, or admitted to his bosom. The sincerity of his nature made his actions ever accompany his promises. He was true to his professions, and pertinacious in his good offices ; never to be alarmed by perilous difficulties, never to be wearied by labour or opposition.

“He was one of the best, and one of the greatest men that any age has produced ; second to none in virtue, equal to most in accomplishments ; of high birth by his ancestors, but much more ennobled by himself. In the various stations of private life, he discharged every duty with piety and exactness ; he was an affectionate, endearing husband, an unalterable and a courageous friend ;

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friend ; to his servants, a tender and careful master ; to his associates, an easy, and often a facetious companion ; grave without severity, witty without ill-nature, open without imprudence ; a splendid original, whom few can copy, but whom all ought to imitate. And if we examine him in his public character, as a statesman, and as first minister to Trajan, he will be acknowledged one of those rare spirits, who seem allotted by heaven as blessings upon earth. The due course and impartial administration of the law, the glory of the commonwealth, the interest and prosperity of the emperor, were the moving springs to all his actions, and the sole end of his most secret designs. His views neither centered in himself, nor in his own family ; they were dilated universally, and took in the whole. He was equally the faithful servant of the empire, of the people, and of the prince. He was indefatigable in business, and immoveable in patriotism : threats could not alarm him ; bribes could not allure him. Thus, above fear, and above temptation, he became a shield to his fellow-citizens, an ornament to the republic, and a support to the emperor. He was an elegant scholar, an excellent philosopher, and a powerful orator ; the patron and example of those arts and sciences which he cultivated and admired. His abilities were only to be exceeded by his candour and integrity ; so that, among the most celebrated names of antiquity, scarce any character will be found adequate to PLINY. He was not absolutely void of resentment, which perhaps he has carried too far in the case of Marcus Aquilius Regulus, for whose misfortune, in the death of an only son, he seems to have less pity, than he discovers upon any other occasion.

“ He is not, however, without his blemishes,” adds Lord Orrery. “ The critics determine his style in general to be too concise, and have discovered

covered in him great marks of vanity and affectation. There is, I confess, some foundation for such censures; his metaphors indeed frequently want uniformity, and are sometimes inconsistent. But his beauties, both in literature and morals, far outweigh all his defects."

Of the several works of PLINY, none have reached our times, except his Epistles, and his Panegyric on the Emperor Trajan.

The following translation of the Epistles has been chiefly copied from Melmoth, but with very considerable alterations in many places. A few epistles are taken from the Earl of Orrery's version. The notes are extracted mostly from those of Melmoth.

The merit of the work is humbly submitted to the public; and the publisher cannot but think he has done an acceptable service to his countrymen, in giving them a neat and correct edition of this celebrated author's Epistles, at almost half the price of either Melmoth's or Lord Orrery's translations.

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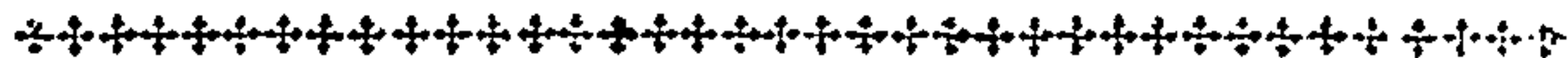


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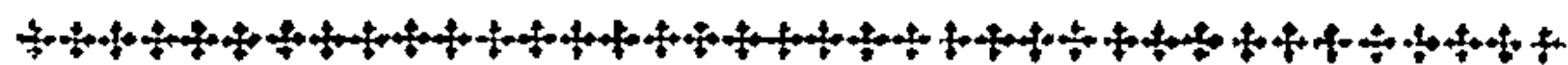
E P I S T L E S

O F

P L I N Y.



B O O K I.



Epist. I. PLINY to SEPTITIUS.

YOU have often pressed me to make a select collection of such letters as I have written with any degree of accuracy, and give them to the public. I have accordingly collected them, not indeed in their proper order of time, for I was not compiling a history ; but just as they happened to come to my hands. And now what remains but to wish that neither you may have occasion to repent of your advice, nor I of my compliance ? the consequence

of which will be, that I may probably inquire after the letters which at present lie neglected, and preserve those I shall hereafter write. Farewell.

Epist. II. PLINY to ARRIANUS.

SINCE I foresee your journey hither is likely to be retarded, I therefore send you the book which I promised in my former letter, begging you would, as usual, revise and correct it. I desire this the more earnestly, as I never, I think, wrote in the same style in any of my former compositions; for I have endeavoured to imitate Demosthenes who was always your favourite, and Calvus who is lately become mine. When I say so, I mean only with respect to their manner; for to catch their sublime spirit, is given alone to the inspired few. My subject indeed seemed naturally to lead me to this (may I venture to call it?) emulation, as it was, in general, of such a nature as demanded all the thunder of eloquence, even to a degree sufficient to have awakened (if in truth it is possible to awake) that indolence in which I have long reposed. I have not however neglected the softer graces of my favourite Tully, where-ever I could with propriety step out of my direct road to enjoy a more flowery path: for it was warmth, not austerity, at which I aimed. I would not have you imagine by this, that I am bespeaking your favour: on the contrary, to induce you to exercise the utmost severity of your criticism, I will confess, that neither my friends nor myself are averse to the publication of this piece, if you should join with us in giving the same partial vote in its favour. The truth is, as I must publish something, I wish (and it is the wish, I confess, of indolence) it might be this performance rather than

than any other, merely because it is already finished. At all events, however, something I must publish, and for many reasons; chiefly, because the tracts which I have already sent into the world, though they have long since lost all their recommendation from novelty, are still, I am told, in request; if, after all, the booksellers do not flatter me. And let them, since by that innocent deceit I am excited to pursue my studies. Farewell.

Epist. III. PLINY to CANINIUS RUFUS.

What passes at * Comum, that favourite scene of yours and mine? What becomes of the pleasant villa, the vernal portico, the shady plane-tree walk, the crystal canal so agreeably winding along its flowery banks, together with the charming † lake below, so well adapted to the purposes of use and beauty? What have you to tell me of the firm yet soft ‡ Gestratio, the sunny bath, the public saloon, the private dining-room, and all the elegant apartments for repose both at || noon and night? Do these enjoy my friend, and divide his time with pleasing vicissitude? Or do the affairs of the world, as usual, call you frequently out from this agreeable

* The city where Pliny was born: it still subsists, and is now called *Como*, situated upon the lake Larius, or *Lago di Como*, in the duchy of Milan.

† The lake Larius, upon the banks of which this villa was situated.

‡ A piece of ground set apart for the purpose of exercise, either on horseback, or in their vehicles; it was generally contiguous to their gardens, and laid out in the form of a circus.

|| It was customary among the Romans to sleep in the middle of the day, and they had apartments for that purpose distinct from their bedchambers.

retreat ? If the scene of your enjoyments lies wholly there, you are happy : if not, you are under the common error of mankind. But leave, my friend, (for certainly it is high time), the sordid pursuits of life to others, and devote yourself, in this calm and undisturbed recess, entirely to pleasures of the studious kind. Let these employ your idle as well as serious hours ; let them be at once your business and your amusement, the subjects of your waking and even sleeping thoughts : produce something that shall be really and for ever your own. All your other possessions will pass on from one master to another : this alone, when once it is yours, will for ever be so. As I well know the temper and genius of him to whom I am addressing myself, I must exhort you to think as well of your abilities as they deserve : do justice to those excellent talents you possess, and the world, believe me, will certainly do so too. Farewell.

Epist. IV. PLINY to POMPEIA CELERINA.

YOU might observe from my last short letter, I had no occasion of yours to inform me of the various conveniencies you enjoy at your several villas. The elegant accommodations which are to be found at * Narnia, † Otriculum, ‡ Carsola, || Perugia, particularly the pretty bath at Narnia, I am extremely well acquainted with. The truth is, I have a property in every thing which belongs to you ; and I know of no other difference between your house and my own, than

* Now called Narni, a city in Umbria, in the duchy of Spoleto.

† Otricoli in the same duchy.

‡ Carsola in the same duchy.

|| Perugia, in Tuscany.

that I more carefully attended in the former than the latter. You may, perhaps, have occasion to make the same observation in your turn, whenever you shall give me your company here; which I wish for, not only that you may partake of mine with the same ease and freedom that I do of yours, but to awaken the industry of my domestics, who are grown something careless in their attendance upon me. A long course of mild treatment is apt to wear out the impressions of awe in servants; whereas new faces quicken their diligence, as they are generally more inclined to please their master by attention to his guest, than to himself. Farewell.

Epist. V. PLINY to VOCONIUS ROMANUS.

DID you ever see a more abject and mean-spirited creature than Regulus has appeared since the death of Domitian, during whose reign his conduct was no less infamous, though more concealed than under Nero's? He has lately expressed some apprehensions of my resentment; as indeed he has reason; for I look upon him with the utmost indignation. He not only promoted the prosecution against Rusticus Arulenus, but exulted in his death; insomuch that he actually recited and published a libel upon his memory, wherein he styles him, *the Stoics ape*; adding, that "he was stigmated by the wound he received in the cause of Vitellius:" such is the strain of his noble eloquence! He fell so furiously upon the character of Herennius Senecio, who was capitally convicted upon the information of Metius Carus, that the latter said to him one day, *Pray what business have you with my dead men? Did I ever interfere in the affair of Cressus, or Camerinus?* These, you know, were victims to Regulus in Nero's time. For these reasons he

imagines I am highly exasperated, and therefore when he recited his last piece, did not give me an invitation. Besides, he has not forgot, it seems, the dangerous snare he once laid for me, when he and I were pleading before the * centumviri. Rusticus had desired me to be counsel for Arionilla, Timon's wife: Regulus was engaged against her. In the course of my defence I strongly insisted upon a decree which had been formerly made by the worthy Modestus, at that time banished by Domitian. Now you shall see Regulus in his true colours: "Pray," says he, "what are your sentiments of Modestus?" You will easily judge how extremely hazardous it would have been to have answered in his favour, and how infamous if I had done otherwise. But some guardian power, I am persuaded, assisted me in this emergency. "I would tell you my sentiments," said I, "if that were a matter for the consideration of the centumviri." Still he repeated his question. I replied, "It was not customary to examine witnesses to the character of a man after sentence had passed upon him." He pressed me a third time: "I do not inquire," said he, "what you think of Modestus in general, I only ask your opinion of his loyalty." "Since you will have

* A select body of men who formed a court of judicature, called the centumviral court. Their jurisdiction extended chiefly, if not entirely, to questions concerning wills and intestates estates; for though Tully, in his first book de Oratore, enumerates other points which came in question before them, yet Pithicus is of opinion (and with great probability), that in latter times their business was singly confined to the cases first mentioned. Their number, as appears by our author, amounted to 180.

" my

“ my sentiments then,” I returned, “ I think it
 “ illegal even to ask a question concerning a per-
 “ son who stands convicted.” This silenced him ;
 and I was universally applauded and congratulated,
 that without wounding my character by an
 advantageous, perhaps, though ungenerous answer,
 I had not entangled myself in so insidious a
 snare. Regulus, conscious of this unworthy
 treatment, has solicited Cæcilius Celer, and Fa-
 bius Justus, to use their interest to bring about a
 reconciliation between us. And lest this should
 not be sufficient, he has applied also to Spurius
 for the same purpose ; to whom he came in the
 humblest manner, (for he is the most abject crea-
 ture living, where he has any thing to fear), and
 intreated him to call upon me very early the next
 morning, and endeavour by any means to soften
 my resentment ; “ for,” says he, “ I can no
 “ longer support myself under this anxiety of
 “ mind.” Accordingly I was awakened the fol-
 lowing day with a message from Spurius, in-
 forming me that he would wait upon me. I sent
 word back, I would call upon him ; however,
 both of us setting out to pay this visit, we met
 under Livia’s portico. He acquainted me with
 the commission he had received from Regulus,
 and interceded for him, as became so worthy a
 man in behalf of one of a very different charac-
 ter, without greatly pressing the thing. I ought
 not, I told him, to conceal the true state of the
 case from him, and after I had informed him of
 that, I would leave it to himself to consider what
 answer was proper for me to return. “ I cannot
 “ positively,” said I, “ determine any thing till
 “ Mauricus * (who was then in exile) shall
 “ return, by whose sentiments I think myself

* Brother to Rusticus Arulenus, who had been put
 to death upon the information of this Regulus.

“ obliged to be entirely guided in this affair.” A few days after Regulus met me as I was attending upon the prætor, and calling me aside, said, he was afraid I deeply resented an expression he had once made use of in his reply to me and Satrius Rufus, before the centumviri, to this purpose: *Rufus and that other, who affects to rival Tully, and to despise the eloquence of our age.* I answered, that now indeed I perceived he spoke it with a sneer, since he owned he meant it so; otherwise it might have passed for a compliment. I was free to own, I said, that I endeavoured to imitate Cicero, and was by no means contented with taking my example from modern eloquence: for I looked upon it as a very absurd thing not to copy the best models of every kind. But “ how happens it,” continued I, “ that you “ who remember so well what passed upon this “ occasion, should have forgot that other, when “ you pushed me so strongly concerning the loyalty of Modestus?” Confounded with this unexpected question, pale as he always is, he turned still more remarkably so. After a good deal of hesitation, he said, it was not me at whom he aimed; it was only Modestus. Observe now, I beseech you, the implacable spirit of this fellow, who was not ashamed thus to confess himself capable of insulting the unfortunate. But the reason he gave in justification of this infamous proceeding, is pleasant. “ He had wrote,” said he, “ in a letter which was read to Domitian, that I “ was the most execrable of all scoundrels:” and what Modestus said, was the truth beyond all manner of controversy. Here, I think, I broke off the conversation, being desirous to reserve to myself the liberty of acting as I should see proper when Mauricus returns. It is no easy matter, I well know, to destroy Regulus; he is rich, and at the head of a party; there are many
with:

with whom he has credit, and more that are afraid of him: a passion that will sometimes prevail even beyond friendship itself. But after all, ties of this sort are not so strong, but they may be loosened; and the popularity of a bad man is more to be depended upon than he is himself. However, (to repeat it again), I shall do nothing in this affair till Mauricus returns. He is a man of sound judgment and great sagacity, formed upon a long course of experience, and who, from his observations on the past, well knows how to judge of the future. I shall consult with him, and think myself justified either in pursuing or dropping this affair, as he shall advise. In the mean while, I thought I owed this account to the friendship that subsists between us, which gives you an undoubted right to be informed, not only of all my actions, but all my designs. Farewell.

Epist. VI. PLINY to CORNELIUS TACITUS.

CERTAINLY you will laugh (and reason you have) when I tell you that the man you know so well has taken three fine boars. Pliny! say you: Yes, Pliny. However, I indulged at the same time my beloved inactivity, and whilst I sat at my nets, you would have found me, not with my boarspear or javelin, but my pencil and pocket-book by my side. I mused and wrote, being resolved if I returned with my hands empty, at least to come home with my papers full. Believe me, this manner of studying is not to be despised: you cannot conceive how greatly exercise contributes to enliven the imagination. There is, besides, something in the solemnity of the venerable woods with which one is surrounded, together with that awful silence which is observed on these occasions,

sions, that strongly inclines the mind to meditation. For the future therefore let me advise you, whenever you hunt, to take along with you your pen and paper, as well as your basket and bottle: for be assured you will find Minerva as fond of traversing the hills as Diana. Farewell.

Epist. VII. PLINY to OCTAVIUS RUFUS.

SEE to what an eminence you have advanced me, by investing me with the same power and dominion which Homer attributes to his mighty Jove.

*Great Jove consents to half t'c chief's request,
But heav'n's eternal door denies the rest.*

It is thus with a nod or a frown, I may grant or reject your petition as I see proper. To be serious: as I am at liberty, I think, to excuse myself to the * Bætici, especially at your request, from being counsel for them against a single person; so on the other hand, to oppose a whole province which I have long since attached to me by many good offices, and spared no pains to oblige even at the hazard of my own interest, would be acting inconsistently with my honour, and that uniformity of conduct which I know you admire. I shall steer therefore in this affair a middle course, and of the alternative which you propose to me, chuse that which will satisfy your judgment, as well as your inclination. For I do not look upon myself obliged to consider so much what you at present desire, as what a man of your worthy character will always ap-

* The people of Bætica, a part of Spain comprehending Andalusia and Granada.

prove. I hope to be at Rome about the 15th of October, when we will join our united credit with Gallus in convincing him of the reasonableness of my offer. In the mean while you may assure him of my good disposition towards him :

*Then with his sable brow he gave the nod,
That seals his word, the sanction of a god **

For why should I not continue to quote Homer's verses, since you will not put it in my power to quote any of yours? which yet I so passionately wish for, that I question whether I could withstand such a bribe, even to plead against my old clients the good people of Bætica. ——— I had almost forgot to mention (what however is of too much importance to be omitted), that I have received the excellent dates you sent me. They are likely to prove very powerful rivals to my favourite figs and morells. Farewell.

Epist. VIII. PLINY to POMPEIUS SATURNI-
NUS.

THE letter which I received from you, wherein you importuned me to communicate to you some of my writings, came very seasonably. I was at that very time designing to send you one. Your request therefore has accelerated the course of a very willing racer, and freed me from every thing that I had to apprehend either from your refusal of this trouble, or my scruples to give it you. Without hesitation I then make use of your offer; as you must now take the consequence of it without reluctance. But you must not expect from so indolent a man any new composition. On the contrary, I am going to intreat you to revise again the speech I made to

* Iliad. 1. ver. 528.

my countrymen, when I dedicated the public library which I founded for their use. You have already, I remember, obliged me with some general observations upon this piece: but I now beg of you, not only to take a view of it in the whole, but distinctly to criticise it, with your usual exactness, in all its parts. When you have corrected it, I shall still be at liberty either to publish or suppress it. The delay in the mean time will be attended with one of these advantages, that while we are deliberating whether it is fit for the public view, a frequent revival will either make it so, or convince me that it is not. Though indeed the principal difficulty with me concerning the publication of this harangue, does not arise so much from the composition itself, as from the subject, which has something in it, I fear, that will look like ostentation. For though the style be ever so plain and unornamented, yet as the occasion necessarily led me to touch not only upon the munificence of my ancestors, but my own; my modesty will be greatly embarrassed. A dangerous and slippery situation this, even when one is led into it by the plea of necessity! For if mankind are not very favourable to panegyric, even when given us by others, how much more difficult is it to reconcile them to it when it is a tribute which we pay to ourselves? Virtue, though stripped of all external advantages, is generally the object of envy, but particularly so, when glory is her attendant; and the world is never so little disposed to wrest and pervert your honest actions, as when they pass unobserved and unapplauded. For these reasons I frequently ask myself, whether I should have composed this harangue, such as it is, merely for my own private use, or with a view also to the public? I am sensible, what may be exceedingly useful and proper in the prosecution of any
affair,

affair, may lose all its grace and fitness the moment the thing is completed: for instance, in the case before us, nothing could be more to my purpose than to explain at large the motives of my intended bounty; for by this means I accustomed my mind to generous sentiments; grew more enamoured of the lovely forms by frequent attention to them, and guarded at the same time against that repentance which usually attends a hasty execution of liberalities not well considered. There arose also a further advantage from this method, as it fixed in me a certain habitual contempt of money. For while mankind seem to be universally governed by an innate disposition to accumulate wealth, the cultivation of a more generous affection in my own breast taught me to free myself from the slavery of so predominant a principle, and I thought my honest intentions would be the more meritorious, as they should appear to proceed, not from a sudden start of temper, but from the dictates of cool and deliberate reflection. I considered, besides, the nature of my design; I was not engaging myself to establish public games, but a fund for the support of ingenuous youths. The pleasures of the senses are so far from wanting the oratorical arts to recommend them, that we stand in need of all the powers of eloquence, to moderate and restrain their influence. But to prevail with those who are capable of the office, to undertake with cheerfulness the disagreeable business of education, it is necessary to apply, in the most artful manner, not only to their interest, but their passions. And if physicians find it expedient to use the most insinuating address in recommending to their patients a wholesome, though perhaps unpleasant regimen; how much more occasion had he to exert all the powers of persuasion, who, out of regard to the public welfare, was endeavour-

ing to reconcile it to a most useful, though not very popular benefaction: particularly, as my aim was to recommend an establishment calculated singly for the benefit of those who were parents, to such as were not so; and to persuade many, that they would patiently wait for, and endeavour to deserve an honour, of which, at present, a few only could partake. But as at that time, when I attempted to explain and enforce the design and benefit of my institution, I considered more the general good of my countrymen, than any reputation which might arise to myself; so I am apprehensive if I publish that piece, it will seem as if I had a view rather to my own character, than the benefit of others. I am very sensible how much nobler it is to place the reward of virtue in the silent approbation of one's own breast, than in the applause of the world. Glory ought to be the consequence, not the motive of our actions; and though fame should sometimes happen not to attend the worthy deed, yet is it by no means the less amiable for having missed the applause it deserved. But the world is apt to suspect that those who celebrate their own generous acts, do not extol them because they performed them, but performed them that they might have the pleasure of extolling them. Thus the splendour of an action which would have shone out in full lustre if related by another, vanishes and dies away when it becomes the subject of your own applause. Such is the disposition of mankind, if they cannot blast the action, they will censure the vanity; and whether you do what does not deserve to be taken notice of, or take notice yourself of what does, either way you incur reproach. In my own case there is a peculiar circumstance that weighs with me: this speech was pronounced, not
before

before the people, but the * *decurii*; not in the forum, but the senate; I doubt therefore it will appear inconsistent that I, who, when I delivered it, seemed to endeavour to avoid popular applause, should now, by publishing this performance, appear to court the approbation of the world: that I, who was so scrupulous as not to admit even those persons to be present when I pronounced this discourse, who were interested in my benefaction, lest it might be suspected I was actuated in this affair by any ambitious views, should now seem to solicit admiration, by forwardly displaying it to such as have no other concern in my munificence than the benefit of example. These are the scruples which have occasioned my delaying to give this piece to the public; but I submit them entirely to your judgment, which I shall ever esteem as a sufficient reason for my conduct. Farewell.

Epist. IX. PLINY to MINUTIUS FUNDANUS.

IT is strange, that the manner of passing our time at Rome, every single day we stay there, either is, or at least seems to be reasonable enough; and yet, upon casting up the whole sum, the amount will appear quite the contrary. For example, Ask any one how he has been employed to-day? he will tell you perhaps, “I have been at the ceremony of taking up the manly † robe; this friend invited me to a wel-

* The *decurii* were a sort of senators in the municipal or corporate cities of Italy.

† The Roman youths at the age of seventeen changed their habit, and took up the *toga virilis*, or *manly gown*, upon which occasion they were conducted by the friends of the family with great ceremony either to the forum or capitol, and there invested with this new robe.

“ding; that desired me to attend the hearing of
“his cause; one begged me to be witness to his
“will; another called me to a consultation.”

These are offices which seem, while one is engaged in them, extremely necessary; and yet, when, in the quiet of some retirement, we look back upon the many hours thus employed, we cannot but condemn them as solemn impertinences. At such a season one is apt to reflect, *How much of my life has been spent in trifles!* at least it is a reflection which frequently comes across me at Laurentum, after I have been employing myself in my studies, or even in the necessary care of the animal machine; (for the body must be repaired and supported, if we would preserve the mind in all its vigour.) In that peaceful retreat, I neither hear nor speak any thing of which I have occasion to repent. I suffer none to repeat to me the whispers of malice; nor do I censure any man, unless myself, when I am dissatisfied with my compositions. There I live undisturbed by rumour, and free from the anxious sollicitudes of hope or fear, conversing only with myself and my books. True and genuine life! pleasing and honourable repose! More, perhaps, to be desired than the noblest employments! Thou solemn sea and solitary shore, best and most retired scene for contemplation, with how many noble thoughts have you inspired me! Snatch then, my friend, as I have, the first occasion of leaving the noisy town with all its very empty pursuits, and devote your days to study, or even resign them to ease: for, as my ingenious friend Attilius pleasantly said, “It is better to do nothing, than to be doing of nothing.” Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. X. PLINY to ATRIVS CLEMENS.

IF ever polite learning flourished in our city, it is certainly now in its brightest lustre. There are numerous and eminent instances of it. I will content myself with naming only one, Euphrates the philosopher. I first became acquainted with this excellent person in my youth, when I served in the army in Syria. I had an opportunity of conversing with him familiarly, and took some pains to gain his affection: though that indeed was nothing difficult, for he is exceeding open to access, and full of that humanity which he professes. I should think myself extremely happy if I had as much answered the expectations he at that time conceived of me, as he exceeds every thing I had imagined of him. But perhaps I admire his excellencies more now, than I did then, because I understand them better, if I can with truth say I understand them yet. For as none but those who are skilled in painting, statuary, or the plastic art, can form a right judgment of any performance in those sciences; so a man must himself have made great advances in learning, before he is capable of forming a just notion of the learned. However, as far as I am qualified to determine, Euphrates is possessed of so many shining talents, that he cannot fail to strike the most injudicious observer. He reasons with much force, penetration, and elegance, and frequently lanches out into all the sublime and luxuriant eloquence of Plato. His style is rich and flowing, and at the same time so wonderfully sweet, that with a pleasing violence he forces the attention of the most unwilling hearer. His outward appearance is agreeable to all the rest: he has a good shape, a comely aspect, long hair, and a large white beard: circumstances.

cumstances which, though they may probably be thought trifling and accidental, contribute however to gain him much reverence. There is an affected negligence in his habit; his countenance is grave, but not austere; and his approach commands respect without creating awe. Distinguished as he is by the sanctity of his manners, he is no less so by his polite and affable address. He points his eloquence against the vices, not the persons of mankind, and without chastising reclaims the wanderer. His exhortations so captivate your attention, that you hang as it were upon his lips; and even after the heart is convinced, the ear still wishes to listen to the harmonious reasoner. His family consists of three children, (two of which are sons), whom he educates with the utmost care. His father-in-law Pompeius Julianus, as he greatly distinguished himself in every other part of his life, so particularly in this, that though he was himself of the highest rank in his province, yet, among many considerable competitors for his daughter, he preferred Euphrates, as first in merit, though not in dignity. But to dwell any longer upon the virtues of a man whose conversation I am so unfortunate as not to have leisure to enjoy, what would it avail but to increase my uneasiness that I cannot enjoy it? My time is wholly taken up in the execution of a very honourable indeed, but very troublesome employment; in hearing of causes, answering petitions, passing accounts, and writing of letters; but letters, alas! where genius has no share. I sometimes complain to Euphrates (for I have leisure at least for that) of these unpleasing occupations. He endeavours to comfort me, by affirming, that to be engaged in the service of the public, to hear and determine causes, to explain the laws, and administer justice, is a part, and the noblest part too,

of

of philosophy, as it is reducing to practice what her professors teach in speculation. It may be so : but that it is as agreeable as to spend whole days in attending to his useful conversation, — even his rhetoric will never be able to convince me. I cannot therefore but strongly recommend it to you, who have leisure, the next time you come to Rome, (and you will come, I dare say, so much the sooner), to take the benefit of his elegant and refined instructions. I am not, you see, in the number of those who envy others the happiness they cannot share themselves : on the contrary, it is a very sensible pleasure to me, when I find my friends in possession of an enjoyment from which I have the misfortune to be excluded. Farewell.

Epist. XI. PLINY to FABIVS JUSTVS.

IT is a long time since I received a letter from you. You will allege, perhaps, you have nothing to write : but let me have the satisfaction at least of seeing it under your hand, or tell me in the good old style, *If you are well, I am so.* I shall be contented even with that ; as indeed that single circumstance from a friend includes every thing. You may possibly think I jest : but believe me I am extremely in earnest. In short, all I desire is, to know how it is with you ; for I can no longer remain in this ignorance without the utmost anxiety. Farewell.

Epist. XII. PLINY to CALESTRIUS TYRO.

I Have suffered a most afflicting loss, if the misfortune of being deprived of so excellent a man may be expressed by that word. Corellius Rufus is dead ! and dead too by his own act ! a galling aggravation to my affliction, as that sort
of

of death which we cannot impute either to the course of nature, or the hand of Providence, is of all others the most to be lamented. It affords some consolation in the loss of those friends whom disease snatches from us, that they fall by the general fate of mankind: but those who destroy themselves leave us under the inconsolable reflection that they had it in their power to have lived longer. It is true, Corellius had many inducements to be fond of life; a blameless conscience, high reputation, and great dignity, together with all the tender endearments of a wife, a daughter, a grandson, and sisters, and amidst these considerable pledges of happiness, many and faithful friends. Still it must be owned he had the highest reason (which to a wise man will always have the force of the strongest obligation) to determine him in this resolution. He had long laboured under so tedious and painful a distemper, that even these blessings, great and valuable as they are, could not balance the evils he suffered. In his thirty-third year, (as I have frequently heard him say), he was seized with the gout in his feet. This he received from his father; for diseases, as well as possessions, are sometimes transmitted by a kind of inheritance. A life of abstinence and virtue had something broke the force of this distemper while he had strength and youth to struggle with it; as a manly courage supported him under the increasing weight of it in his old age. I remember in the reign of Domitian, I made him a visit at his villa near Rome, where I found him under the most incredible and undeserved tortures; for the gout was not only in his feet, but had spread itself over his whole body. As soon as I entered his chamber, his servants withdrew: for it was his constant rule, never to suffer them to be present when any very intimate friend was with him: he even carried it so far as to dismiss his wife

wife upon such occasions, though worthy of the highest confidence. Looking round about him, “Do you know,” says he, “why I endure life under these cruel agonies? It is with the hope that I may outlive, at least for one day, that villain. And O! ye gods, had you given me strength, as you have given me resolution, I would infallibly have that pleasure!” Heaven heard his prayer, and having survived that tyrant, and lived to see liberty restored, he broke through those great, but however now less forcible attachments to the world, since he could leave it in possession of security and freedom. His distemper increased; and as it now grew too violent to admit of any relief from temperance, he resolutely determined to put an end to its uninterrupted attacks by an effort of heroism. He had refused all sustenance for four days, when his wife Hispulla sent to me our common friend Geminius, with the melancholy news that he was resolved to die; and that she and her daughter having in vain joined in their most tender persuasions to divert him from his purpose, the only hope they had now left was my endeavours to reconcile him to life. I ran to his house with the utmost precipitation. As I approached it, I met a second messenger from Hispulla, who informed me there was nothing to be hoped for, even from me, as he now seemed more inflexible than ever in his resolution. What confirmed their fears was an expression he made use of to his physician, who pressed him to take some nourishment: “It is resolved,” he said: an expression, which as it raised my admiration of his greatness of soul, so it does my grief for the loss of him. I am every moment reflecting what a valuable friend, what an excellent man I am deprived of. That he was arrived to his sixty-seventh year, which is an age even the strongest seldom exceed, I well know:

know : that he is delivered from a life of continual pain ; that he left his family, and (what he loved even more) his country in a flourishing state ; all this I know. Still I cannot forbear to weep for him as if he had been in the prime and vigour of his days : and I weep (shall I own my weakness ?) upon a private account. For I have lost, oh ! my friend, I have lost the witness, the guide, and the director of my life ! And to confess to you what I did to Calvisius in the first transport of my grief, I sadly fear, now that I am no longer under his eye, I shall not keep so strict a guard over my conduct. Speak comfort to me therefore, I intreat you ; not by telling me that *he was old, that he was infirm* ; all this I know ; but by supplying me with some arguments that are uncommon, and resistless, that neither the commerce of the world, nor the precepts of the philosophers can teach me. For all that I have heard, and all that I have read occur to me of themselves ; but all these are by far too weak to support me under so heavy an affliction. Farewell.

Epist. XIII. PLINY to SOCIUS SENECEO.

THIS year has produced a most plentiful harvest of poets. Scarce a day has passed, during the whole month of April, wherein we have not been entertained with the recital of some poem. It is a pleasure to me to find, notwithstanding there seems to be so little disposition in the public to attend assemblies of this kind, that the sciences still flourish, and men of genius are not discouraged from producing their performances. It is visible, the greater part of the audience which is collected upon these occasions, come with reluctance ; they loiter round the place of assembly, join in little parties of conversation, and

and send every now and then to inquire whether the author is come in, whether he has read the preface, or whether he has almost finished the piece. Then, with an air of the greatest indifference, they just look in and withdraw again; some by stealth, and others with less ceremony. It was not thus in the time of our ancestors. It is reported, that Claudius Cæsar one day hearing a noise near his palace, inquired the occasion of it, and being informed that Nonianus was reciting a composition of his, went immediately to the place, and agreeably surprised the author with his presence. But now, were one to bespeak the company even of the most idle man living, and remind him of the appointment ever so often, or ever so long beforehand, either he would avoid it under pretence of forgetfulness, or if not, would look upon it as so much time lost; and for no other reason, perhaps, but because he had not lost it. So much the rather do those authors deserve our encouragement and applause, who have resolution to persevere in their studies, and exhibit their performances, notwithstanding this indolence, or pride of their audience. For my own part, I scarce ever refuse to be present upon such occasions. Though to say truth, the authors have generally been my friends; as indeed there are few men of genius who are not. It is this has kept me in town longer than I intended. I am now however at liberty to withdraw to my retirement, and write something myself; but without any intentions of reciting in my turn. I would not have it thought that I rather lent than gave my attendance; for in these, as in all other good offices, the obligation ceases the moment you seem to expect a return. Farewell.

Epist. XIV. PLINY⁹ to JUNIUS MAURICUS.

YOU ask me to look out for a husband, to whom you may give your niece: a task, in which you very rightly prefer me before all others. For you well know how I loved and honoured that excellent man her father. You well know by what encouragements he cherished my youth, and what praises he bestowed upon me at that time, to make me afterwards capable of deserving them. No command of yours to me could carry greater weight and pleasure with it: nor can I be engaged in a more honourable undertaking, than in chusing out some young man, from whom may descend grandsons and successors to Aulenus Rusticus. Such a man might be long sought after, if Minicius Acilianus did not present himself to my mind, born as it were for that purpose: he is some few years younger than I am, so that we live with the easy familiarity and affection of young people, and yet he reveres me as an experienced old man. He submits to be modelled and instructed by me, in the same manner as I have been by you, and your brother: his country is Brixia, in our part of Italy, which still retains and keeps up the modest, frugal, and plain manners of the ancients. His father is Minicius Macrinus, the head of the equestrian order, having always declined a higher station: for Vespasian offered to chuse him one of the prætors; but he was constant and firm in preferring virtuous retirement to such pursuits as ours, which I am in doubt whether to call ambition or dignity. His grandmother on his mother's side is Serrana Procula, a native of Padua. You know the manners of the place, but Serrana is an example of the strictest virtue even to the Paduans. His
uncle

uncle is P. Acilius, a man of singular authority, prudence, and integrity. In short, throughout the whole family you will find nothing but what will please you as much as in your own. As for Acilianus himself, he is a man of a strong constitution, indefatigable at business, and yet of an invincible modesty. He has passed through the several offices of quæstor, tribune, and prætor, with great honour, and so has saved you the trouble of soliciting those employments for him. His countenance is free and open, his complexion ruddy and healthful, his whole person beautiful and genteel, and his carriage graceful and senatorian. These are accomplishments by no means (according to my way of thinking) to be overlooked; but they are such as ought to be mentioned, as a reward due to a young lady's unblemished chastity. I do not know whether I should add, that his father is very rich. When I consider to whom I am pointing him out as a son-in-law, I think riches ought not to be mentioned; but when I reflect upon the prevailing customs of the times, and particularly upon the laws of our city, by which men are valued according to the value of their estates, certainly, in that view, riches are not to be omitted. Besides, when we look forward to a numerous posterity, and the many consequences of marriage, a good fortune is a very necessary ingredient. Perhaps you will imagine I have been indulging my partial fondness for Acilianus, and have strained the character beyond the truth: but, I give you my word, you will find hereafter, that every thing I have said, will admit of greater latitude, than I have taken. I love the young man entirely, and he deserves my affection. But still a religious part of that love is not to overload my friends with praises. Farewell.

Epist. XV. PLINY to SEPTITIUS CLARUS.

WHat is the reason, my friend, that when you promised to sup with me, you have not performed your engagement? But take notice, justice is to be had, and you shall fully reimburse me the expense I was at to treat you; which was no inconsiderable sum. I had prepared, you must know, a lettuce apiece, three snails, two eggs, and a barley-cake, with some sweet wine and snow: the snow most certainly I shall charge to your account, as a rarity that will not keep. Besides all these curious dishes, there were olives of Andalusia, gourds, shallots, and a hundred other dainties equally sumptuous. You should likewise have been entertained either with an interlude, the rehearsal of a poem, or a piece of music, as you liked best; or (such was my liberality) with all three. But the luxurious delicacies and Spanish dancers of a certain —— I know not who, were, it seems more to your taste. However, I shall have my revenge of you, depend upon it; — in what manner, shall at present be a secret. In good truth, it was not kind, thus to mortify your friend, I had almost said yourself; — and upon second thoughts I do say so: for how agreeably should we have spent the evening, in laughing, trifling, and deep speculation! You may sup, I confess, at many places more splendidly; but you can be treated no where, believe me, with more unconstrained cheerfulness, simplicity, and freedom: only make the experiment; and if you do not ever afterwards prefer my table to any other, never favour me with your company again. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XVI. PLINY to ERUCIUS.

I Entertained a regard for my friend Pompeius Saturninus, and extolled his genius, even long before I knew how luxuriant, manageable, and extensive it was: but he has now taken full and unreserved possession of my whole heart. I have heard him in the unpremeditated, as well as studied speech, plead with no less warmth and energy, than grace and eloquence. He abounds with just reflections; his periods are graceful and majestic; his words harmonious, and stamped with the authority of genuine antiquity. These united qualities infinitely delight you, not only when you are carried along, if I may so say with the resistless flow of his charming and emphatical diction; but when considered distinct and apart from that advantage. I am persuaded you will be of this opinion when you peruse his orations, and will not hesitate to place him in the same rank with the ancients, whom he so happily imitates. But you will view him with still higher pleasure in the character of an historian, where his style is at once concise and clear, smooth and sublime; and the same energy of expression, though with more closeness, runs through his harangues, which so eminently distinguishes and adorns his pleadings. But these are not all his excellencies; he has composed several poetical pieces in the manner of my favourite Calvus and Catullus: What strokes of wit, what sweetness of numbers, what pointed satire, and what touches of the tender passion appear in his verses! in the midst of which he sometimes designedly falls into an agreeable negligence in his metre, in imitation too of those admired poets. He read to me, the other day, some letters which he assured me were written by

his

his wife: I fancied I was hearing Plautus or Terence in prose. If they are that lady's, (as he positively affirms), or his own, which he absolutely denies, either way he deserves equal applause; whether for writing so politely himself, or for having so highly improved and refined the genius of his wife, whom he married young and uninstructed. His works are never out of my hands; and whether I sit down to write any thing myself, or to revise what I have already written, or am in a disposition to amuse myself, I constantly take up this agreeable author; and as often as I do so, he is still new. Let me strongly recommend him to the same degree of intimacy with you; nor be it any prejudice to his merit that he is a contemporary writer. Had he flourished in some distant age, not only his works, but the very pictures and statues of him would have been passionately inquired after; and shall we then, from a sort of satiety, and merely because he is present among us, suffer his talents to languish and fade away unhonoured and unadmired? It is surely a very perverse and envious disposition, to look with indifference upon a man worthy of the highest approbation, for no other reason but because we have it in our power to see him, and to converse with him, and not only to give him our applause, but to receive him into our friendship. Farewell.

Epist. XVII. PLINY to CORNELIUS TITIANUS.

Virtue and acts of friendship are not yet extinct in the world; and there are still those who shew themselves friends even to the dead. Titianus Capito has obtained the emperor's permission to erect a statue in the forum to the late L. Syllanus. It is a noble and truly laudable exertion

exertion of princely favour, to employ it to purposes such as these, and to try the extent of one's interest for the glory of others. It is indeed habitual to Capito to distinguish merit. He has placed in his house (where he is at liberty to do so) the statues of the Bruti, the Cassi, and the Catos, and it is incredible what a religious veneration he pays them. But his generosity does not terminate here: there is scarce a name of any note or lustre that he has not celebrated and rendered more conspicuous, by his excellent verses. One may be very sure a man must be possessed of great virtue himself, who thus admires it in others. As Syllanus certainly deserves the honour that is done him, so Capito has by this means secured to himself that immortality which he has conferred on his friend; for in my opinion he who erects a statue in the Roman forum, receives as much glory, as the person to whom it is erected. Farewell.

Epist. XVIII. PLINY to SÜETONIUS TRANQUILLUS.

YOU write me that you have been extremely terrified with a dream, as apprehending that it threatens some ill success to you in your law-suit; and therefore desire that I would get it put off for a few days, or at least to the next. This is a favour, you are sensible, not very easily obtained, but I will use all my interest for that purpose;

———*For dreams descend from Jove*.*

In the mean while it is very material † for you to recollect whether your dreams generally represent

* Pope, Iliad i. 63.

† Dreams were considered from the earliest antiquity.

present things as they afterwards fall out, or quite the reverse. But if I may judge of yours by one that happened to myself, you have nothing to fear; for it portends you will acquit yourself with great success. I had promised to be counsel for Julius Paſtor; when I fancied in my ſleep that my mother-in-law came to me, and throwing herſelf at my feet, earneſtly intreated me not to be concerned in the cauſe. I was at that time a very young man; the caſe was to be argued in the four centumviral courts; my adverſaries were ſome of the moſt conſiderable men in Rome, and particular favourites of Cæſar; any of which circumſtances were ſufficient, after ſuch an inauspicious dream, to have diſcouraged me. Notwithſtanding this, I engaged in the cauſe, reflecting within myſelf,

quity as ſacred admonitions and hints of futurity. Many of the Heathen oracles were delivered in this manner, and even among the Jews we find ſeveral intimations conveyed to their prophets in the ſame way. The Romans in general were great obſervers of dreams, and Auguſtus Cæſar is ſaid to have eſcaped a very imminent danger at the battle of Philippi, by quitting his tent in compliance with a dream of Antonius his phyſician. This is mentioned to obviate any prejudice againſt Pliny, which may ariſe in the mind of a reader unacquainted with the prevailing ſentiments of the ancients upon this point, who might otherwiſe be ſurpriſed to find our author talk ſeriouſly upon a ſubject of this nature. The truth is, an eminent critic has obſerved with great good ſenſe, there ſeems to be as much temerity in never giving credit to dreams, as there is ſuperſtition in always doing ſo. “It appears to me,” ſays he, “that the true
 “medium between theſe two extremes, is to treat
 “them as we would a known liar; we are ſure he
 “moſt uſually relates falſhoods; however, nothing
 “hinders but he may ſometimes ſpeak truth.”

Without

*Without a sign, his sword the brave man draws,
And asks no omen, but his country's cause * :*

for I looked upon the promise I had given, to be as sacred to me as my country, or, if that were possible, more so. The event happened as I wished; and it was that very cause which first procured me the favourable attention of the public, and threw open to me the gates of Fame. Consider then whether your dream, like that which I have related, may not portend success. Or after all, perhaps, you will think it more safe to pursue this cautious maxim: “*Never do a thing of, which you are in doubt:*” if so, write me word. In the interval I will consider of some expedient, and endeavour your cause shall be heard any day you like best. In this respect you are in a better situation than I was: the court of the centumviri, where I was to plead, admits of no adjournment; whereas in that where your cause is to be heard, though it is not easy to procure one, still however it is possible. Farewell.

Epist. XIX. PLINY to ROMANUS FIRMUS.

YOU are my countryman, my schoolfellow, and my companion from my earliest youth: there was the strictest friendship between my mother and uncle, and your father; a happiness which I also enjoyed as far as the great inequality of our ages would admit: can I fail then (biassed as I am towards your interest by so many strong and weighty reasons) to contribute all in my power to the advancement of your dignity? The rank you bear in our province as a decurio, is a proof that you are possessed at least of an hundred thousand sesterces; but that we may also have the pleasure of seeing you a Roman knight, give me

* Iliad xii. 243. POPE.

leave to present you with three hundred thousand, in order to make up the sum requisite to entitle you to that dignity. The long acquaintance we have had, leaves me no room to doubt you will ever be forgetful of this instance of my friendship. And I need not advise you (what, if I did not know your disposition, I should) to enjoy this honour with the modesty that becomes one who received it from me: for the dignity we possess by the good offices of a friend, is a kind of sacred trust, wherein we have *his* judgment, as well as our own character, to maintain, and therefore to be guarded with peculiar attention.

Epist. XX. PLINY to CORNELIUS TACITUS.

I Have frequent disputes with a friend of mine, a person of knowledge and erudition, who admires nothing so much in the eloquence of the bar as conciseness. I agree with him, where the cause will admit of this manner, it may be properly enough pursued; but insist, that to omit what is material to be mentioned, or only slightly to touch upon those points which should be strongly inculcated, and urged home to the minds of the audience, is in effect to desert the cause one has undertaken. In many cases a copious manner of expression gives strength and weight to our ideas, which frequently make impressions upon the mind, as iron does upon solid bodies, rather by repeated strokes than a single blow. In answer to this he usually has recourse to authorities; and produces Lyfias amongst the Grecians, and Cato and the two Gracchi among our own countrymen, as instances in favour of the concise style. In return, I name Demosthenes, Æschines, Hesperides, and many others in opposition to Lyfias; while I confront Cato and the Gracchi, with Cæsar, Pollio, Cælius, and above all Cicero, whose longest oration is generally esteemed

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ed the best. It is in good compositions, as in every thing else that is valuable; the more there is of them, the better. You may observe in statues, basso-relievos, pictures, and the bodies of men, and even in animals and trees, that nothing is more graceful than magnitude, if accompanied with proportion. The same holds true in pleading: and even in books, a large volume carries something of beauty and authority in its very size. My antagonist, who is extremely dexterous at evading an argument, eludes all this, and much more which I usually urge to the same purpose, by insisting that those very persons, upon whose works I found my opinion, made considerable additions to their orations when they published them. This I deny: and appeal to the harangues of numberless orators; particularly to those of Cicero for Murena and Varenus, where he seems to have given us little more than the general charge. Whence it appears, that many things which he enlarged upon at the time he delivered those orations, were retrenched when he gave them to the public. The same excellent orator informs us, that, agreeably to the ancient custom which allowed only one counsel on a side, Cluentius had no other advocate but himself; and tells us farther, that he employed four whole days in defence of Cornelius: by which it plainly appears, that those orations which, when delivered at their full length, had necessarily taken up so much time at the bar, were greatly altered and abridged when he afterwards comprised them in a single volume, though, I must confess indeed, a large one. But it is objected, there is a wide difference between good pleading and just composition. This opinion, I acknowledge, has had some favourers, and it may be true; nevertheless I am persuaded, (though I may perhaps be mistaken), that, as it is possible a pleading may be well received by the audience,

audience,

audience, which has not merit enough to recommend it to the reader ; so a good oration cannot be a bad pleading : for the oration on paper is, in truth, the original and model of the speech that is to be pronounced. It is for this reason we find in many of the best orations extant, numberless expressions which have the air of unpremeditated discourse ; and this even where we are sure they were never spoken at all : as for instance in the following passage from the oration against Verres,—“ *A certain mechanic——what’s his name? Oh, I’m obliged to you for helping me to it: yes, I mean Polycletus.*” It cannot then be denied, that the nearer approach a speaker makes to the rules of just composition, the more perfect he will be in his art ; always supposing however, that he has the necessary indulgence in point of time : for if he be abridged of that, no imputation can justly be fixed upon the advocate, though certainly a very great one is chargeable upon the judge. The sense of the laws is, I am sure, on my side, which are by no means sparing of the orator’s time : it is not brevity, but an enlarged scope, a full attention to every thing material, which they recommend. And how is it possible for an advocate to acquit himself of that duty, unless in the most insignificant causes, if he affects to be concise ? Let me add what experience, that unerring guide, has taught me : it has frequently been my province to act both as an advocate and a judge, as I have often assisted as an assessor, where I have ever found the judgments of mankind are to be influenced by different applications, and that the slightest circumstances often produce the most important consequences. There is so vast a variety in the dispositions and understandings of men, that they seldom agree in their opinions about any one point in debate before them ; or if they do, it is generally from the
movement

movement of different passions. Besides, as every man naturally favours his own discoveries, and when he hears an argument made use of which had before occurred to himself, will certainly embrace it as extremely convincing, the orator therefore should so adapt himself to his audience as to throw out something to every one of them, that he may receive and approve as his own peculiar thought. I remember when Regulus and I were concerned together in a cause, he said to me, *You seem to think it necessary to insist upon every point; whereas I always take aim at my adversary's throat, and there I closely press him.* ('Tis true, he tenaciously holds whatever part he has once fixed upon; but the misfortune is, he is extremely apt to mistake the right place.) I answered, it might possibly happen that what he took for what he called the *throat*, was in reality some other part. As for me, said I, who do not pretend to direct my aim with so much certainty, I attack every part, and push at every opening; in short, to use a vulgar proverb, *I leave no stone unturned.* As in agriculture, it is not my vineyards, or my woods alone, but my fields also that I cultivate; and (to pursue the allusion) as I do not content myself with sowing those fields with only one kind of grain, but employ several different sorts; so, in my pleadings at the bar, I spread at large a variety of matter like so many different seeds, in order to reap from thence whatever may happen to it: for the disposition of your judges is as precarious and as little to be ascertained, as that of soils and seasons. I remember the comic writer Eupolis mentions it in praise of that excellent orator Pericles, that

*Softest persuasion sat upon his tongue,
And on his lips engaging sweetness hung;*

*Yet with a strength that fix'd upon the mind,
That forc'd its way, and left its sting behind.*

But could Pericles, without the richest variety of expression, and merely by force of the concise or the rapid style, or both together, (for they are extremely different), have exerted that *charm* and that *sting* of which the poet here speaks? To delight and to persuade requires time, and a great compass of language; and to leave a *sting* in the minds of his audience, is an effect not to be expected from an orator who slightly pushes, but from him, and him only, who thrusts home and deep. Another * comic poet, speaking of the same orator, says,

*His mighty words like Jove's own thunder roll;
Greece bears, and trembles to her inmost soul.*

But it is not the concise and the reserved, it is the copious, the majestic, and the sublime orator, who with the blaze and thunder of his eloquence hurries impetuously along, and bears down all before him. There is a just mean, I own, in every thing; but he equally deviates from that true mark, who falls short of it, as he who goes beyond it; he who confines himself in too narrow a compass, as he who lanches out with too great a latitude. Hence it is as common to hear our orators condemned for being too barren, as too luxuriant; for not reaching, as well as for overflowing the bounds of their subject. Both, no doubt, are equally distant from the proper medium; but with this difference however, that in the one the fault arises from an excess, in the other from a deficiency; an error which if it be not a sign of a more correct, yet it is certainly of a more exalted genius. When I say this, I

* Aristophanes.

would

would not be understood to approve that everlasting * talker mentioned in Homer, but that other † described in the following lines :

*But when he speaks, what elocution flows!
Soft as the fleeces of descending snows.*

Not but I extremely admire him ‡ too, of whom the poet says,

Few were his words, but wonderfully strong.

Yet if I were to chuse, I should clearly give the preference to the style resembling *winter snow*, that is, to the full and diffusive; in short, to that pomp of eloquence which seems all heavenly and divine. But ('tis urged) the harangue of a more moderate length is most generally admired. It is so, I confess: but by whom? By the indolent only; and to fix the standard by the laziness and false delicacy of these, would surely be the highest absurdity. Were you to consult persons of this cast, they would tell you, not only that it is best to say little, but that it is best to say nothing.—Thus, my friend, I have laid before you my sentiments upon this subject, which I shall readily abandon, if I find they are not agreeable to yours. But if you should dissent from me, I beg you would communicate to me your reasons. For though I ought to yield in this case to your more enlightened judgment, yet in a point of such consequence, I had rather receive my conviction from the force of argument, than authority. If you should be of my opinion in this matter, a line or two from you in return, intimating your

* Therites, Iliad ii. 212.

† Ulysses, Iliad iii. 222.

‡ Menelaus, ibid.

concurrence, will be sufficient to confirm me in the justness of my sentiments. On the contrary, if you think me mistaken, I beg you would give me your objections at large. Yet has it not, think you, something of the air of bribery, to ask only a short letter if you agree with me; but enjoin you the trouble of a very long one, if you are of a contrary opinion? Farewell.

Epist. XXI. PLINY to PATERNUS.

I Rely as much upon the strength of your judgment, as upon the goodness of your eyes: not because I think you excel in skill, (for I would not have you flatter yourself,) but because you equal me in it: which, it must be allowed, is saying a great deal in its favour. However, jesting apart, I like very well the appearance of the slaves which were purchased for me by your recommendation; all that I want farther, is to be satisfied of their behaviour; and for this I must depend upon their characters more than their countenances. Farewell.

Epist. XXII. PLINY to CATILIUS SEVERUS.

I Have been detained a long time in town, under the most alarming apprehensions. Titus Aristo, whom I particularly love and admire, is fallen into a tedious and obstinate illness, which deeply affects me. Virtue, knowledge, and good sense shine out with so superior a lustre in this excellent man, that learning herself and every valuable endowment seems involved in the danger of his single person. How consummate is his knowledge both in the political and civil laws of his country! How thoroughly conversant is he in every branch of history and antiquity! There is no article of science, in short,
you

you would wish to be informed of, in which he is not skilled. As for my own part, whenever I would acquaint myself with any abstruse point of literature, I have recourse to him, as to one who supplies me with its most hidden treasures. What an amiable sincerity, what a noble dignity is there in his conversation! How humble, yet how graceful is his diffidence! Though he conceives at once every point in debate, yet he is as slow to decide, as he is quick to apprehend, calmly and deliberately weighing every opposite reason that is offered, and tracing it, with a most judicious penetration, from its source through all its remotest consequences. His diet is frugal; his dress plain; and whenever I enter his chamber, and view him upon his couch, I consider the scene before me as a true image of ancient simplicity, to which his illustrious mind reflects the noblest ornament. He places no part of his happiness in ostentation, but refers the whole of it to conscience; and seeks the reward of his virtue, not in the clamorous applauses of the world, but in the silent satisfaction which results from having acted well. In short, you will not easily find his equal even among our philosophers by profession. He frequents not the places of public disputations, nor idly amuses himself and others with vain and endless controversies. His nobler talents are exerted to more useful purposes; in the scenes of civil and active life. Many has he assisted with his interest, still more with his advice! But though he dedicates his time to the affairs of the world, he regulates his conduct by the precepts of the philosophers; and in the practice of temperance, piety, justice, and fortitude he has no superior. It is astonishing with what patience he bears his illness; how he struggles with pain, endures thirst, and quietly submits to the troublesome regimen necessary in

a raging fever. He lately called me, and a few more of his particular friends, to his bedside, and begged we would ask his physicians what turn they apprehended his distemper would take : that if they pronounced it incurable, he might voluntarily put an end to his life ; but if there were hopes of a recovery, however tedious and difficult, he might wait the event with patience ; for so much, he thought, was due to the tears and entreaties of his wife and daughter, and to the affectionate intercession of his friends, as not voluntarily to abandon our hopes, if in truth they were not entirely desperate. A resolution this, in my estimation, truly heroical, and worthy of the highest applause. Instances are frequent enough in the world, of rushing into the arms of death without reflection, and by a sort of blind impulse : but calmly and deliberately to weigh the reasons for life or death, and to be determined in our choice as either side of the scale prevails, is the mark of an uncommon and great mind. We have had the satisfaction of the opinion of his physicians in his favour ; and may heaven give success to their art, and free me from this restless anxiety ! If that should happily be the event, I shall immediately return to my favourite Laurentinum, or, in other words, to my books and studious retirement. At present, so much of my time and thoughts is employed in attendance upon my friend, and in my apprehensions for him, that I have neither leisure nor inclination for subjects of literature. Thus have I informed you of my fears, my wishes, and my intentions. Communicate to me, in your turn, but in a gayer style, an account not only of what you are and have been doing, but even of your future designs. It will be a very sensible consolation to me in this perplexity of mind, to be assured that yours is easy. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XXIII. PLINY to POMPEIUS FALCO.

YOU ask me, whether I think you can with decency plead as a lawyer during your tribunate? I should first know what are your sentiments of that office; whether you look upon it as a mere shadow of honour, and an empty title, or as a sacred and inviolable function, the exercise of which as no power can suspend, so neither ought the person himself who is invested with it? When I was myself in that post, (possibly I might be mistaken in supposing I was become of any importance, however upon the supposition that I really was), I entirely quitted the bar. I thought it unbecoming a magistrate, who, upon all occasions, had a right of precedency, and in whose presence every body is obliged to rise, to be seen standing, while all about him were seated: that he who has authority to impose silence on any man, should himself be directed when to be silent: that he, whom it is held impious to interrupt, should be exposed to the scurrilous liberties of bar-orators; which to chastise, would be thought a sort of insolence of office, and yet it would be weakness to overlook. I considered farther, the great difficulty I should be under if either side should happen to appeal to me as tribune, whether to interpose my authority, or, by a kind of resignation of it, to have acted in my private capacity. For these reasons I rather chose to be the tribune of all, than the advocate of a few. But with respect to you, (I repeat it again), the whole depends upon what your sentiments are of this office, and under what character you would chuse to appear; remembering always, that a wise man will take upon himself such only to which he is capable of acting up.

Epist. XXIV. PLINY to BEBIUS HISPANUS.

MY friend and guest Tranquillus has a mind to buy a small piece of land, of which, it is said, an acquaintance of yours intends to dispose. I beg you would endeavour he may have it upon reasonable terms: a circumstance which will add to his satisfaction in obtaining it. A dear bargain is always disagreeable, particularly, as it is a reflection upon the purchaser's judgment. There are several circumstances attending this little villa, which (supposing my friend has no objection to the price) are extremely suitable to his taste: the convenient distance from Rome, the goodness of the roads, the smallness of the building, and the very few acres of land around it, which is just enough to amuse, but not employ him. To a man of the studious turn that Tranquillus is, it is sufficient if he has but a small spot to relieve the mind and divert the eye, where he may saunter round his grounds, traverse his single walk, grow familiar with his two or three vines, and count his little plantations. I mention these particulars, to let you see how much he will be obliged to me, as I shall to you, if you can help him to the purchase of this little *box*, so agreeable to his taste, upon terms of which he shall have no occasion to repent. Farewell.

B O O K II.

Epist. I. PLINY to VOCONIUS ROMANUS.

THE Roman people have not for many years beheld so magnificent and solemn a spectacle, as was lately exhibited in the public funeral of that great man, the illustrious

ous and fortunate Verginius Rufus. He lived thirty years in the full enjoyment of the highest reputation; and as he had the satisfaction to see his actions celebrated by poets, and recorded by historians, he seems even to have anticipated his fame with posterity. He was thrice raised to the dignity of consul, that he who refused to be the first of princes, might at least be the highest of subjects. As he escaped the resentment of those emperors to whom his virtues had given umbrage, and even rendered him odious, and ended his days when this best of princes, this friend of mankind, was in quiet possession of the empire, it seems as if Providence had purposely preserved him to these times, that he might receive the honour of a public funeral. He arrived, in full tranquillity and universally revered, to the 84th. year of his age, having enjoyed an uninterrupted state of health during his whole life, excepting only a paralytic disorder in his hands, which however was attended with no pain. His last sickness, indeed, was severe and tedious; but even the accident that occasioned it, added to his glory. As he was preparing to return his public acknowledgments to the emperor, who had raised him to the consulship, a large volume which he accidentally received at that time, too weighty for a feeble old man, slipped out of his hands. In hastily endeavouring to recover it, the pavement being extremely slippery, he fell down and broke his thigh-bone; which fracture, as it was unskilfully set at first, and having besides the infirmities of age to contend with, could never be brought to unite again. The funeral obsequies paid to the memory of this great man, have done honour to the Emperor, to the present age, and even to eloquence herself. The consul Cornelius Tacitus pronounced his funeral oration: for the series of his felicities was crowned by the
applause

applause of the most eloquent of orators. He died full of years and of glory, as illustrious by the honours he refused, as by those he accepted. Still, however, he will be missed and lamented by the world, as the bright model of a better age ; especially by myself, who not only admired him as a patriot, but loved him as a friend. We were not only natives of the same province, and of neighbouring towns, but our estates were contiguous. Besides these accidental connections with him, he was also left guardian to me ; and indeed he treated me with the affection of a parent. Whenever I offered myself a candidate for any employment, he constantly supported me with his interest ; as in all the honours I have obtained, though he had long since renounced all offices of this nature, he would kindly give up the repose of his retirement, and come in person to solicit for me. At the time when it is customary for the priests to nominate such as they judge worthy to be received into their sacred office, he constantly proposed me. Even in his last sickness I received a distinguishing mark of his affection : being apprehensive he might be named one of the five commissioners appointed by the senate to reduce the public expenses, he fixed upon me, young as I am, to carry his excuses, in preference to so many other friends of superior age and dignity ; and in a very obliging manner assured me, that had he a son of his own, he would nevertheless have employed me in that office. Have I not sufficient cause then to lament his death, as if it were immature, and thus pour out the fulness of my grief in the bosom of my friend ? if indeed it be reasonable to grieve at all upon this occasion, or to esteem that event death, which to such a man is rather to be looked upon as the period of his mortality than the end of his life.

He:

He lives, my friend, and will continue to live for ever; and his fame will spread farther, and be more celebrated by mankind, now that he is removed from their sight. ——— I had many other things to write to you, but my mind is so entirely taken up with this subject, that I cannot call it off to any other. *Ver*ginus is constantly in my thoughts; the vain but lively impressions of him are continually before my eyes, and I am for ever fondly imagining that I hear him, converse with him, and embrace him. There are, perhaps, and possibly hereafter will be, some few who may rival him in virtue; but not one, I am persuaded, that will ever equal him in glory. Farewell.

Epist. II. PLINY to PAULINUS.

I Am in a rage; whether I have reason, is not quite so clear; but very angry I am. Love, you know, is sometimes unreasonable, often ungovernable, always jealous. The occasion of this my formidable wrath is great, you must allow, were it but just: yet taking it for granted that there is as much truth as weight in it, I am most vehemently enraged at your long silence. Would you soften my resentment? Let your letters for the future be very frequent, and very long; I shall excuse you upon no other terms; and as absence from Rome, or encouragement in business, is a plea I can by no means admit; so that of ill health, the gods, I hope, will not suffer you to allege. As for myself, I am enjoying at my villa the alternate pleasures of study and indolence; those happy privileges of retired leisure! Farewell.

Epist. III. PLINY to NEPOS.

THE fame of Iſæus was very great, before he appeared among us ; but he is ſuperior to all that was reported of him. His faculties, his powers, and his wit are inexhaustible ; and his unpremeditated diſcourſes have as much propriety and elegance as if they had been long compoſed. He ſpeaks the Greek language, or rather the genuine Attic. His exordiums are polite, eaſy, and harmonious ; and, when occaſion requires, ſolemn and majeſtic. He gives his audience liberty to call for any queſtion they pleaſe, and ſometimes even to name what ſide of it he ſhall take ; when immediately he riſes up in all the graceful attitude of an orator, and enters at once into his ſubject with ſurpriſing fluency. His reflections are ſolid, and clothed in the choiceſt expreſſions, which preſent themſelves to him with the utmoſt facility. The eaſe and ſtrength of his moſt unprepared diſcourſes, plainly diſcovers he has been very converſant in the beſt authors, and much accuſtomed to compoſe himſelf. He opens his ſubject with great propriety ; his ſtyle is clear, his reaſoning ſtrong, his inferences juſt, and his figures graceful and ſublime. In a word, he at once inſtructs, entertains, and affects you ; and each in ſo high a degree, that you are at a loſs to determine in which of thoſe talents he moſt excels. His arguments are formed in all the ſtrength and conciſeneſs of the ſtricteſt logic : a point not very eaſy to attain ever in ſtudied compoſitions. His memory is ſo extraordinary, that he will repeat what he has before ſpoke extempore, without loſing a ſingle word. This wonderful faculty he has acquired by great application and practice ; for his whole time is ſo devoted to ſubjects of
this

this nature, that he thinks and talks of nothing else. Though he is above sixty-three years of age, he still chuses to continue in this profession; than which, it must be owned, none abounds with men of more worth, simplicity, and integrity. We who are conversant in the real contentions of the bar, unavoidably contract a certain artfulness, however contrary to our natural tempers: but the business of the schools, as it turns merely upon matters of imagination, affords an employment as innocent as it is agreeable; and it must, methinks, be particularly so to those who are advanced in years; as nothing can be more desirable at that period of life, than to enjoy those reasonable pleasures, which are the most pleasing entertainments of our youth. I look therefore upon Isæus, not only as the most eloquent, but the most happy of men; as I shall esteem you the most insensible, if you appear to slight his acquaintance. Let me prevail with you then to come to Rome, if not upon my account, or any other, at least for the pleasure of hearing this extraordinary person. Do you remember to have read of a certain inhabitant of the city of Cadiz, who was so struck with the illustrious character of Livy, that he travelled to Rome on purpose to see that great genius; and, as soon as he had satisfied his curiosity, returned home again? A man must have a very inelegant, illiterate, and indolent, (I had almost said a very mean) turn of mind, not to think whatever relates to a science so entertaining, so noble, and so polite, worthy of his curiosity. You will tell me, perhaps, you have authors in your own study, equally eloquent. I allow it: and those authors you may turn over at any time, but you cannot always have an opportunity of hearing Isæus. Besides, we are infinitely more affected
with

with what we hear, than what we read. There is something in the voice, the countenance, the habit, and the gesture of the speaker, that concurs in fixing an impression upon the mind, and gives this method of instruction greatly the advantage of any thing one can receive from books. This at least was the opinion of Æschines, who having read to the Rhodians a speech of Demosthenes, which they loudly applauded; *but how*, said he, *would you have been affected, had you heard the orator himself thundering out this sublime harangue?* Æschines, if we may believe Demosthenes, had great dignity of utterance; yet, you see, he could not but confess it would have been a considerable advantage to the oration, if it had been pronounced by the author himself in all the pomp and energy of his powerful elocution. What I aim at by this, is, to persuade you to come and hear Isæus; and let me again entreat you to do so, if for no other reason, at least that you may have the pleasure to say, you once heard him. Farewell.

Epist. IV. PLINY to CALVINA.

HAD your father left several creditors, or indeed a single one except myself, it might have been a doubt whether you ought in prudence to enter upon his estate, which, considering its incumbrances, might prove a burthen too heavy even for a man to undertake. But since, out of regard to the affinity that subsisted between us, I was contented to remain the only person unsatisfied who had any demand upon the estate, while other creditors, I will not say more troublesome, but certainly more cautious, were paid off: and as I contributed, you may remember, 100,000 sesterces towards
your

your marriage-portion, over and above the sum your father charged upon this estate for your fortune, which may be esteemed my gift too, as it was to be paid out of a fund which was before appropriated to me. — When you consider, I say, these instances of my friendship, you can want no assurance of my favourable disposition towards you. In confidence of which, you should not scruple to enter upon this inheritance, and by that means protect the memory of your father from the reproach of his dying insolvent. But that I may give you a more substantial encouragement to do so, than mere words, I entirely acquit you of the debt which he owed me. Do not scruple to receive this present at my hands, upon the supposition that I can ill spare so large a sum. It is true, my fortune is but moderate: the expenses which my station in the world requires are considerable; while the yearly income of my estate, from the nature and circumstances of it, is as uncertain as it is small; yet what I want in wealth, I make up by œconomy, the surest source that supplies my bounty. I must be cautious, no doubt, not to exhaust it by too much profusion; but it is a caution which I shall observe towards others: with respect to yourself, reason, I am sure, will justify my liberality, though it should exceed my usual bounds. Farewell.

Epist. V. PLINY to LUPERCUS.

THE piece which you have so often desired, and which I have as frequently promised, I now send you: but it is part of it only; the remainder I am still polishing. In the mean while, I thought there would be no impropriety in laying before you such parts as were most correct. I beg you would read it with the

same close attention that I wrote it ; for I never was engaged in any work that required so much. In my other speeches, my diligence and integrity only were concerned ; in this I had to manifest my patriotism. But while I dwelt with pleasure upon the honour of my native country, and endeavoured not only to support its rights, but heighten its glory ; my oration swelled insensibly. However, I beg you would abridge it, even in those favourite topics, where-ever you find reason to do so ; for when I consider the great delicacy of my readers, I am sensible the surest recommendation I can have to their favour, is by the shortness of the trouble I give them. But at the same time that I abandon my performance to your utmost severity in this instance, I must ask quarter for it in some others. Some consideration ought to be had to the taste of young people, especially where the subject admits of it. In view to this, I have given myself a latitude in the descriptions of places, which occur frequently in this performance ; and have taken the liberty to treat them not only historically, but poetically. If any austere critic should take offence at this, and think it too florid for the gravity of this sort of compositions ; the other parts of the oration will, I trust, satisfy his severity, and obtain indulgence for these gay and colourings. I have, indeed, endeavoured to gain my readers, by adapting my style to their different turns. And though I am afraid there are some passages that will displease particular persons, as not falling in with their peculiar taste ; yet, upon the whole, its variety, I imagine, will recommend it in general : as at an elegant entertainment, though we do not, perhaps, taste of every dish, yet we admire the general disposition of the whole ; and if we happen to meet with something not to our palate, we are not the less pleased

fed however with what is. I am not so vain as to pretend I have actually furnished out such an entertainment; I would be only understood to mean that I have attempted to do so. And possibly my attempt may not prove altogether fruitless, if you will exercise your skill upon what I now send you, and shall hereafter send. You will tell me, I know, that you can form no certain judgment till you see the whole. There is some truth in this, I confess: however, for the present you may acquaint yourself with this detached part, wherein you will find some things, perhaps, that will bear a separate examination. If you were to be shewn the head, or any other part of a statue, though you could not determine what proportion it bore to the entire figure, yet you would be able to judge of the elegance of that particular member. From what other principle is it that specimens of books are handed about, but that it is supposed the beauties of particular parts may be seen, without taking a view of the whole? — The pleasure I receive in conversing with you has carried me, I perceive, a greater length than I intended. But I stop here; for it is not reasonable that I, who am for setting bounds even to a speech, should set none to a letter. Farewell.

Epist. VI. PLINY to AVITUS.

IT would be too tedious, and of little importance, to tell you by what accident I (who am not over-apt to run into familiarities) supped lately with a person, who, in his own opinion, treated us with much splendour and economy; but, according to mine, in a sordid, yet expensive manner. Some very elegant dishes were served up to himself and a few more of the

company ; while those which were placed before the rest were extremely mean. There were, in small quantities, three different sorts of wine ; but you are not to suppose it was, that the guests might take their choice ; on the contrary, that they might not chuse at all. The best was for himself and his friends of the first rank ; the next for those of a lower order, (for, you must know, he measures out his friendship according to the degrees of quality) ; and the third for his own and his guests freed-men. One who sat near me took notice of this, and asked me how I approved of it ? Not at all, I told him. Pray then, said he, what is your method on such occasions ? Mine, I returned, is, to give all my company an equal reception ; for when I make an invitation, it is in order to entertain, not to distinguish my company : I set every man upon a level with myself when I admit him to my table, not excepting even my freed-men, whom I look upon at those times to be my guests, as much as any of the others. At this he expressed some surprise, and asked me, if I did not find it a very expensive method ? I assured him, not at all ; and that the whole secret lay, in being contented to drink no better wine myself than I gave to them. And certainly, if a man is wise enough to moderate his own luxury, he will not find it so very chargeable a thing to entertain all his visitors in general, as he does himself. Restrain the delicacy of your own palate within proper bounds, if you would be an œconomist in good earnest. You will find temperance a much better method of saving expenses, than such reproachful distinctions. It were pity a young man of your excellent disposition should be imposed upon by the immoderate luxury which prevails at some tables, under the notion of frugality. And whenever any folly of this nature falls with-

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in my observation, I shall, in consequence of that affection I bear you, point it out to you as an example which you ought to shun. Remember, therefore, nothing is more to be avoided than this modern conjunction of luxury and fordidness; qualities extremely odious when existing in distinct characters, but much more so where they meet together in the same person. Farewell.

Epist. VII. PLINY to MACRINUS.

YESTERDAY the senate decreed, on the motion of the Emperor, a triumphal statue to Vestricius Spurinna: not as to many others who never were in an army, never saw a camp, or heard the sound of a trumpet, unless at the public diversions; but as to one who by his sweat, his wounds, and his heroism, has justly merited that honour. Spurinna, by the power of his arms, restored the king of the Bructeri to his throne; and this by a victory of all others the most noble; for he struck such a terror into that warlike people, that they submitted at the very first view of his troops. But at the same time that the senate rewarded him as a hero, they considered him as a father; and as a consolation to him for the loss of his son Cottius, who died during his absence upon that expedition, they voted likewise a statue to that excellent youth. A very unusual honour for one of his early years; but the services of the father well deserved it; and so severe a wound required an extraordinary application. Indeed Cottius himself gave so remarkable a specimen of the noblest qualities, that it is but reasonable his life, which had so short a period, should be extended, as it were, by this kind of immortality. The purity of his manners, and the gravity of his behaviour crea-
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ted

ted him such respect, that he well deserves to equal those venerable persons in honour, whom he rivalled in virtue: an honour, if I mistake not, conferred not only in memory of the deceased youth, and in consolation to the surviving father, but for the sake of public example. The young men of this age will be hence encouraged to cultivate every worthy principle, when they see such distinguishing rewards bestowed upon one of their own years; at the same time that men of quality will rejoice in having a numerous issue, while they may expect the satisfaction of leaving a worthy race behind, if their children survive them; or so glorious a consolation, if they survive their children.. For the sake of the public therefore I am glad that a statue is decreed to Cottius: and so indeed I am upon my own; for I loved this accomplished youth as ardently, as I now tenderly regret him. It will be a great satisfaction to me to see this figure every now and then as I pass by, and to stop sometimes to contemplate it. If there is a pleasure in looking upon the pictures of departed friends in our own house, how much more those public representations of them, which are not only memorials of their air and countenance, but of their glory and honour? Farewell.

Epist. VIII. PLINY to CANINIUS.

ARE you employed in study? are you fishing? are you hunting? or do you unite both together, as you well may on the banks of our favourite Larius? For the lake affords fish; the woods that surround it, wild beasts; and the sequestered scene, sufficient solitude for study. Whether you are entertained with all, or any of these agreeable amusements, far be it that I should say I envy you; but I must confess, I greatly regret that I cannot

cannot partake of them too; a happiness I as earnestly long for, as a man in a fever does for drink to allay his thirst, or baths and fountains to assuage his heat. Shall I never break loose (if I may not disentangle myself) from these ties that thus closely withhold me? I doubt indeed, never: for new affairs are daily increasing, while yet the former remain unfinished: such an endless train of business rises upon me, and rivets my chains still faster! Farewell.

Epist. IX. PLINY to APOLLINARIS.

THE petition preferred by Sextus Erucius to the senate, makes me extremely anxious. I am overwhelmed with care, and I feel more uneasiness for my friend, whom I consider as my second self, than ever I did for myself. Besides, my credit, my character, and my dignity are in some measure at stake. I obtained for him of our emperor the honour of wearing the *laticlave*, and the office of quæstor; as it was by my interest that he was indulged with the privilege of petitioning for the tribunate; which if the senate should refuse him, I am afraid it will be thought I imposed upon the emperor. I must therefore, in support of my own character, endeavour, that the judgment of the public may confirm the opinion which Cæsar has conceived of him, by my representation. But if I were not obliged for these reasons to interest myself in the success of Erucius, yet his probity, good sense, and learning would incline me to assist him with my utmost power; as indeed he and his whole family are deserving of the highest applause. His father, Erucius Clarus, is a man of strict honour and ancient simplicity of manners; an able, eloquent, and experienced advocate, and defends every cause he undertakes, with a courage and integrity

ty equal to his great modesty. Septitius, his uncle, is one of the most plain, open, sincere, and candid men I ever knew. There is a friendly contention amongst them who shall shew me most affection; which I am persuaded they all give me in an equal degree. I have now an opportunity of obliging the whole family, in the single person of Erucius; for which purpose, I warmly solicit all my friends, go about to every place of public resort, and, in a word, exert my whole power and credit to serve him. I must beg of you likewise to take some share of this trouble with me; I will return you the same good office whenever you shall require it, and even without your request. As you have many friends, admirers, and dependents, it is but shewing yourself a wellwisher to Erucius in this affair, and numbers will be ready to second your inclinations. Farewell.

Epist. X. PLINY to OCTAVIUS.

O Thou obstinate, thou hard-hearted, nay thou most cruel man, thus to keep such excellent compositions so long buried! How long do you intend to deny us the pleasure of your verses, and yourself the glory of them? Suffer them, I entreat you, to come abroad, and to be admired; as admired they undoubtedly will be where-ever the Roman language is understood. The public, believe me, has long and earnestly expected them, and you ought not to disappoint or delay it any longer. Some few poems of yours have already, contrary to your inclinations indeed, broke their prison and escaped to light: these if you do not collect together, some person or other will claim the agreeable wanderers as their own. Remember, my friend, the mortality of human nature, and that there is nothing so likely.

likely to preserve your name, as a monument of this kind; all others are as frail and perishable as the men whose memory they pretend to perpetuate. You will say, I suppose, as usual, Let my friends see to that. May you find many whose care, fidelity, and learning render them able and willing to undertake so considerable a charge! But surely it is not altogether prudent to expect from others, what a man will not do for himself. However, as to publishing of them, I will press you no farther; be that when you shall think proper. But let me, at least, prevail with you to recite them, that you may be more disposed to send them abroad; and may receive the satisfaction of that applause, which I will venture, upon very just grounds, to assure you of beforehand. I please myself with imagining the croud, the admiration, the applause, and even the silence that will attend you: for the silence of an audience, when it proceeds from an earnest desire of hearing, is as agreeable to me as the loudest approbation. Do not then, by this unreasonable reserve, defraud your labours any longer of a fruit so certain and so desirable: if you should, the world, I fear, will be apt to charge you with carelessness, and indolence, or, perhaps, with timidity. Farewell.

Epist. XI. PLINY to ARRIANUS.

IT is usually a pleasure to you, I know, to hear of any thing that is transacted in the senate, becoming the dignity of that august assembly: for though love of ease has called you into retirement, your heart still retains its zeal for the honour of the public. Accept then the following account of what lately passed in that venerable body: a transaction for ever memorable by its importance, and not only remarkable by
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the quality of the person concerned, but useful by the severity of the example. Marius Priscus, formerly proconsul of Africa, being impeached by that province, instead of entering upon his defence, petitioned that a commission of select judges might be appointed for his trial. Cornelius Tacitus and myself, being assigned by the senate counsel for that province, thought it our duty to inform the house, that the crimes alleged against Priscus, were of too atrocious a nature to fall within the cognisance of an inferior court: for he was charged with venality in the administration of justice, and even selling the lives of the innocent. Fronto Catus stood up in his favour, and moved that the whole inquiry might be confined to the single article of bribery; displaying upon this occasion all the force of that pathetic eloquence he is master of, in order to raise the compassion of the senate. The debates grew warm, and the members were much divided in their sentiments. Some were of opinion, that it was a matter which did not legally come under the inquiry of the senate: others, that the house was at liberty to proceed upon it, or not, as it saw proper; and that the method of bringing him to punishment ought to be as extraordinary as his crimes. At last Julius Ferox, the consul elect, a man of great worth and integrity, proposed that judges should be granted him provisionally, and in the mean while, that those persons should be proceeded against, to whom it was alleged he had sold innocent blood. Not only the majority of the senate gave into this opinion; but, after all the contention that had been raised, it was unanimously received. From whence I could not but observe, that sentiments of compassion, though they at first operate with great violence, subside at length, and give way to the cool dictates of reason and judgment.

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thus it happens, that numbers will defend by joining in the general cry, what they would never calmly propose by themselves. The truth is, there is no discerning an object in a croud; one must take it aside, if one would view it in its true light. Vitellius Honoratus, and Flavius Marcianus, the persons who were ordered to be summoned, were brought before the house. Honoratus was charged with having given three hundred thousand sesterces to procure a sentence of banishment against a Roman knight, as also the capital conviction of seven of his friends. Against Marcianus it was alleged, that he gave seven hundred thousand, that another Roman knight might be condemned to suffer various tortures; which was accordingly executed, and the unhappy man was first whipped, afterwards sent to work in the mines, and at last strangled in prison. But the death of Honoratus prevented the justice of the senate upon him. Marcianus however appeared, but without Priscus. Tutius Cerealis, therefore, who had been formerly consul, thought proper to move, that Priscus, agreeably to his privilege as a senator, might have notice of what they were going upon: whether it was because he thought his being present would raise more compassion, or more resentment towards him; or because, as I am inclined to believe, he thought it most equitable, as the charge was against them both, so they should both join in the defence, and be acquitted or condemned together. The affair was adjourned to the next meeting of the senate, which was the most august and solemn I was ever present at. The emperor himself (for he was consul) presided. It happened likewise to be the month of January, a season remarkable upon many accounts, and particularly for the great number of senators it always brings together: moreover, the
importance

importance of the cause, the noise it had made in the world, the expectation that had been raised by the several adjournments, together with that innate disposition in mankind to acquaint themselves with every thing great and uncommon, drew the people together from all parts. Image to yourself the concern and anxiety we, who were to speak before such an awful assembly, and in the presence of the prince, must feel. I have often pleaded in the senate; as indeed there is no place where I am more favourably heard; yet, as if the scene had been entirely new to me, I found myself under an unusual fear upon this occasion. Besides, there was something in the circumstances of the person accused, which added considerably to the difficulties I laboured under: a man, once of consular dignity, and a member of the sacred college, now stood before me stripped of all his honours. It was a painful office, I thought, to accuse one who appeared already condemned; and for whom therefore, tho' his crimes were enormous, compassion took its turn, and seemed to plead in his behalf. However, I collected myself enough to begin my speech; and the applause I received, was equal to the fears I had suffered. I spoke almost five hours successively, (for they indulged me above an hour beyond the time at first allotted to me); and what at my first setting out had most contributed to raise my apprehensions, proved in the event greatly to my advantage. The goodness, the care of the emperor (I dare not say his anxiety) were so great towards me, that he frequently spoke to one of my attendants, who stood behind me, to desire me to spare myself; imagining I should exert my strength beyond what the weakness of my constitution would admit. Claudius Marcellinus replied in behalf of Marcianus. After which the assembly broke up till the next day;

day; for the evening coming on, there was not time to proceed farther. The next day, Salvius Liberalis, a very clear, artful, spirited, and eloquent orator, spoke in defence of Priscus: and he exerted all his talents upon this occasion. C. Tacitus replied to him with great eloquence, and a certain dignity which distinguishes all his speeches. Fronto Catus arose up a second time for Priscus, and, in a very fine speech, endeavoured, as indeed the case required, rather to soften the judges, than defend his client. The evening coming on, the senate proceeded no farther that day; but met the next, and entered upon the proofs. It was something very noble, and worthy of ancient Rome, to see the senate, adjourned only by the night, thus assemble for three days together. The excellent Cornutus Tertullus, consul elect, ever firm in the cause of truth, moved that Marius should pay into the treasury the 700,000 sesterces he had received, and be banished Italy. He was for extending the sentence still farther against Marcianus, and banishing him even Africa. He concluded with saying, that Tacitus and I having faithfully and diligently discharged the parts assigned to us, the senate declared, we had executed our trust to their satisfaction. The consuls elect, and those who had already enjoyed that office, agreed with Tertullus, except Pompeius: he proposed that Priscus should pay the seven hundred thousand sesterces into the treasury, but to suffer no other punishment than what had been already inflicted upon him for extortion: as for Marcianus, he was for having him banished for five years only. There was a large party for both opinions, and perhaps the majority secretly inclined to the milder sentence; for many of those who appeared at first to agree with Tertullus, seemed afterwards to join with Pompeius. But, upon a division of the

house, all those who stood near the consuls, went over to the side of Tertullus. Pompeius's party observing this, deserted him, and went over too; so that he was extremely exasperated against those who had urged him to this vote, particularly against Regulus, whom he upbraided for abandoning of him in a step, which he himself had advised. There is, indeed, such an inconsistency in the general character of Regulus, that he is at once both bold and timorous. Thus ended this important trial; but there remains a considerable part of the business still behind. It is concerning Hostilius Firminus, lieutenant to Marius Priscus, who is strongly charged with being an accomplice with him: for it appears by the accounts of Marcianus, and by a speech which he made in an assembly of the people at Leptis, that he had exacted fifty thousand denarii of Marcianus; that he was otherwise accessory to the wicked administration of Priscus; and that he received ten thousand sesterces under the title of his perfumer; an office perfectly adapted to one of his effeminate delicacy. It was agreed, at the motion of Tertullus, to proceed against him, at the next meeting of the senate; for, either by accident or design, he was at this time absent.—Thus have I given you an account of what is doing in town. Let me know, in return, the news of the country; how your groves and your vineyards, your corn and your fine flocks of sheep flourish? In a word, if you do not send me a long letter, you must expect to be punished in your own way, and to receive from me, for the future, none but short ones. Farewell.

Epist. XII. PLINY to ARRIANUS.

THE remainder of the public inquiry which I mentioned to you in my last letter concerning

cerning the affair of Marius Priscus, at last, I will not say completed as it ought, however it is finished. Firminus being brought before the senate, made such a sort of defence as a man generally does who is found guilty. The consuls elect were much divided what judgment to give. Cornutus Tertullus moved he should be expelled the senate: but Nerva, with wondrous acuteness! proposed, that he should be only declared for ever incapable of holding the office of proconsul: and this, as it had the appearance of a milder sentence, prevailed; though in truth it is of all others the most severe. For can any situation be more wretched, than to be obliged to undergo the fatigue of a member of the senate, at the same time that one is cut off from all hopes of enjoying those honours to which a senator is entitled? And after having received such an ignominy, were it not better to be for ever buried in retirement, than to be marked out by so conspicuous a station, to the view and scorn of the world? Besides, to consider this with respect to the public, what can be more unbecoming the majesty of the senate, than to suffer a person to retain a seat in that august assembly, after having been publicly censured by it? What can be more indecent than for the criminal to be ranked with his judges? for a man excluded the proconsulship, because he behaved infamously as a lieutenant, to sit in judgment upon proconsuls? for one proved guilty of extortion, to condemn or acquit others of the like crimes? Yet these reflections, it seems, made no impression upon the majority. Votes go by number, not weight; nor can it be otherwise in assemblies of this kind, where nothing is more unequal than that equality which prevails in them; for though every member has the same right of suffrage, every member has not the same strength of judgment.

ment to direct it. I have thus discharged the promise I gave you in my last letter, which by this time I imagine (unless any accident has befallen the messenger) has reached your hands; for I trusted the conveyance of it to one, of whose diligence and fidelity I am well assured. I hope you will now, on your part, make me as full a return for this and my former, as the scene you are in will permit. Farewell.

Epist. XIII. PLINY to PRISCUS.

AS I know you most eagerly take every occasion to oblige me, so there is no man to whom I had with more pleasure lay myself under an obligation. These two reasons, therefore, have determined me to apply to you, preferably to any body else, for a favour which I am extremely desirous of obtaining. You who have the command of a very considerable army, have thereby many opportunities of conferring benefits; and the length of time you have enjoyed that post, must have enabled you to bestow favours upon all your own friends. I hope you will now turn your eyes upon some of mine: they are but a few indeed, for whom I shall solicit you; though your generous disposition, I know, would be better pleased if the number were greater. But it would ill become me to trouble you with recommending more than one or two: at present I will only mention Vocorius Romanus. His father was of great distinction among the Roman knights; and his father-in-law, or, as I might more properly call him, his second father, (for his affectionate treatment of Voconius entitles him to that appellation), was still more conspicuous. His mother was one of the most considerable ladies of Upper Spain: you know what character the people of that province

vince bear, and how remarkable they are for the strictness of their manners. As for himself, he has been lately admitted into the sacred order of priesthood. Our friendship began with our studies, and we were early united in the closest intimacy. We lived together under the same roof, in town and country; as he shared with me my most serious and my gayest hours: and where, indeed, could I have found a more faithful friend, or more agreeable companion? In his conversation, and even in his very voice and countenance, there is the most amiable sweetness; as at the bar he discovers an elevated genius, an easy and harmonious elocution, a clear and penetrating apprehension. He has so happy a turn for* epistolary writing, that were you to read his

* It appears from this, and some other passages in these letters, that the art of epistolary writing was esteemed by the Romans, in the number of liberal and polite accomplishments; and we find Cicero mentioning with great pleasure, in some of his letters to Atticus, the elegant specimen he had received from his son, of his genius in this way. [ad Att. l. xv. 16. 17.] It seems indeed to have formed part of their education; as, in the opinion of Mr Locke, it well deserves to have a share in ours. “The writing of letters (as that judicious author observes) enters so much into all the occasions of life; that no gentleman can avoid shewing himself in compositions of this kind. Occurrences will daily force him to make this use of his pen, which lays open his breeding, his sense, and his abilities, to a severer examination than any oral discourse.” [Treat. on educ. 86.] Pliny was of the same opinion; for in a subsequent* letter, wherein he lays down a method of study to one who desired his sentiments upon that head, he particularly recommends

* Book 7. let. 9.

his letters, you would imagine they had been dictated by the muses themselves. I love him with a more than common affection, and I know he returns it with equal ardour. Even in the earlier part of our lives, I warmly embraced every

to him performances of this kind. It is to be wondered we have so few writers in our own language, who deserve to be pointed out as models upon such an occasion. After having named Sir William Temple, it would be difficult, perhaps, to add a second. The elegant writer of Mr Cowley's life, mentions him as excelling in this uncommon talent; but as that author declares himself of opinion, "That letters which pass between familiar friends, if they are written as they should be, can scarce ever be fit to see the light," the world is unluckily deprived of what, no doubt, would have been well worth its inspection. A late distinguished genius treats the very attempt as ridiculous, and professes himself "a mortal enemy to what they call a fine letter." His aversion however was not so strong but he knew how to conquer it when he thought proper, and the letter which closes his correspondence with Bishop Atterbury, is, perhaps, the most genteel and manly address that ever was penned to a friend in disgrace. The truth is, a fine letter does not consist in saying fine things, but expressing ordinary ones in an uncommon manner. It is the *proprie communia dicere*, the art of giving grace and elegance to familiar occurrences, that constitutes the merit of this kind of writing. Mr Gay's letter concerning the two lovers who were struck dead with the same flash of lightning, is a masterpiece of the sort; and the specimen he has there given of his talents for this species of composition, makes it much to be regretted we have not more from the same hand: we might then have equalled, if not excelled, our neighbours the French in this, as we have in every other branch of polite literature, and have found a name among our own countrymen to mention with the easy Voiture.

opportunity

opportunity of doing him all the good offices which then lay in my power; as I have lately obtained for him of the emperor, the privilege granted to those who have three children: a favour, which though Cæsar very rarely bestows, and always with great caution, yet he conferred, at my request, in such a manner, as to give it the air and grace of being his own choice. The best way of shewing that I think he deserves the obligations he has already received from me, is, by adding more to them, especially as he always accepts my good offices with so much gratitude as to merit farther. Thus I have given you a faithful account of Romanus, and informed you how thoroughly I have experienced his worth, and how much I love him. Let me entreat you to honour him with your patronage in a way suitable to the generosity of your heart, and the eminence of your station. But, above all, admit him into a share of your affection; for though you were to confer upon him the utmost you have in your power to bestow, you can give him nothing so valuable as your friendship. That you may see he is worthy of it, even to the highest degree of intimacy, I have sent you this short sketch of his character. I should continue my intercessions in his behalf, but that I am sure you do not love to be pressed, and I have already repeated them in every line of this letter: for to shew a just reason for what one asks, is to intercede in the strongest manner. Farewell.

Epist. XIV. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

YOU judged right: I am a good deal tired with pleading before the centumviri. The business one is engaged in there, has more of fatigue than pleasure. The causes are generally of small moment, and it is very seldom that any thing

thing considerable, either from the importance of the question, or the rank of the persons concerned, comes before them. There is this farther disagreeable circumstance attending it, that there are very few lawyers who frequent this court, with whom I can take any sort of satisfaction in being engaged. The greater part is composed of a parcel of impudent, obscure young men, who come hither raw and unpractised from the schools, with so much irreverence and impropriety, that my friend Attilius with great justness observed, “our youth set out at the bar
“with centumviral causes, as they do at school
“with Homer,” intimating, that in both places they begin where they should end. But in former times, (to use an old man’s phrase), it was not customary for the youth, even of the best families, to appear in this court, unless introduced by some person of consular dignity: so much respect did our ancestors bear to this noble profession. But now, since every fence of modesty and reverence is broken down, and all distinctions levelled and confounded, the youth of our days are so far from waiting to be introduced, that they rudely rush in uninvited. The audience that follow them are fit attendants for such orators; a low rout of hired mercenaries, assembling themselves in the middle of the court, where the dole is dealt round to them as openly, as if they were in a dining-room: and at this noble price they run from court to court! The Greeks have a name in their language for this sort of people, importing that they are applauders by profession; and we stigmatize them with the opprobrious title of table-flatterers: yet the meanness alluded to in both languages increases every day. It was but yesterday, two of my servants, mere striplings, were hired for this good-

ly office at the price of three * denarii: such is the easy purchase of eloquence! Upon these honourable terms, we fill our benches and gather a circle; and thus it is those unmerciful shouts are raised, when a man who stands in the middle of the ring gives the word. For you must know, these honest fellows who understand nothing of what is said, or if they did, could not hear it, would be at a loss, without a signal, how to time their applause; for those that do not hear a syllable are as clamorous as any of the rest. If at any time you should happen to pass by while the court is sitting, and would know the merit of any of our advocates, you have no occasion to give yourself the trouble of listening to them: take it for a rule, he that has the loudest commendations, deserves them the least: Largius Licinius was the first who gave rise to this custom; but then he went no farther than to solicit an audience. I remember to have heard my tutor Quinctilian say, that Domitius Afer, as he was pleading before the centumviri with his usual grave and solemn manner, heard on a sudden a most immoderate and unusual noise; being a good deal surprised he left off: the clamour ceased, and he began again: he was interrupted a second time, and a third. At last he inquired who it was that was speaking? He was told, Licinius. *Alas!* said he, *eloquence is no more!* The truth is, it then only began to decline, when, in Afer's opinion, it was entirely perished: whereas now it is almost utterly lost and extinct. I am ashamed to say with what an unmanly elocution the orators deliver themselves, and with what a squeaking applause they are received; no-

* About one shilling and eleven pence farthing of our money.

thing seems wanting to complete this sing-song oratory, but the claps, or rather the music of the stage. At present we chuse to express our admiration by a kind of howling, (for I can call it by no other term), which would be indecent even in the theatre. Hitherto the interest of my friends, and the consideration of my early time of life has retained me in this court: for it would be thought, I fear, rather to proceed from indolence than a just indignation at these indecencies, were I yet to leave it: however, I come there less frequently than usual, and am thus making a gradual retreat. Farewell.

Epist. XV. PLINY to VALERIANUS.

TELL us, how does your Marſian eſtate pleaſe you, which you bought long ago? How do you like your new purchaſe? Are all theſe lands as fair in your eye, ſince they became your property, as they were before? For, to ſay truth, it ſeldom happens, that what is already poſſeſſed, proves ſo agreeable, as when it was only in wiſh and proſpect.

My mother's eſtate does not at all ſuit me in its ſituation; but it pleaſes me, becauſe it was hers. And now time and patience have accuſtomed and hardened me to bear all the inconveniencies ariſing from it; for, by having had conſtant complaints to make, I am grown abſolutely aſhamed of complaining. Farewell.

Epist. XVI. PLINY to ANNIANUS.

WITH your uſual attention to my affairs, you admoniſh me not to look upon the codicils of Acilianus, who has appointed me his heir *ex parte*, as legal; becauſe they are not confirmed by the will itſelf. This is a point of law;

law, with which I am very well acquainted: and it is known even by those, who know little else. But I have always laid it down as a rule to myself, never to disobey the will of the dead; but to act under every will, though it should be defective in point of form, as if it had been perfected and valid. However, the codicils were all written by Acilianus's own hand; and though they are not confirmed by the will itself, they ought to be looked upon by me, in the same light as if they needed no such authority; especially, as there is no room for an information to be lodged against me. If indeed there was any danger, that what I gave away, would be forfeited to the public, I ought to act with less haste, and with more caution: but, when it is entirely in the power of an heir to dispose of whatever falls to him by inheritance, I am under no necessity to break through my own private rule, since it is not repugnant to any public institution. Farewell.

Epist. XVII. PLINY to GALLUS.

YOU wonder, why I am so very fond of my Laurentinum, or (if you had rather call it so) my Laurens: but your wonder will cease, when I acquaint you with the beauty of the villa, the advantages of its situation, and the extensive prospect of the sea-coast. It is but seventeen miles distant from Rome; so that having finished my affairs in town, I can pass my evenings here without breaking in upon the business of the day. There are two different roads to it; if you go by that of Laurentum, you must turn off at the fourteenth mile-stone; if by Ostia, at the 11th. Both of them are in some parts sandy, which makes it something heavy and tedious if you travel in a coach, but easy and pleasant to those who ride. The landscape on all sides is extremely diversified, the prospect in some places being confined by
woods,

woods, in others extending over large and beautiful meadows, where numberless flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, which the severity of the winter has drove from the mountains, fatten in the vernal warmth of this rich pasturage. My villa is large enough to afford conveniencies, without being extensive. The porch before it is plain, but not mean, through which you enter into a portico in the form of the letter D, which includes a small, but agreeable area. This affords a very commodious retreat in bad weather, not only as it is inclosed with windows, but particularly as it is sheltered by an extraordinary projection of the roof. From the middle of this portico you pass into an inward court extremely pleasant, and from thence into a handsome hall which runs out towards the sea; so that when there is a south-west wind it is gently washed with the waves, which spend themselves at the foot of it. On every side of this hall there are either folding-doors or windows equally large, by which means you have a view from the front and the two sides, as it were of three different seas: from the back part you see the middle court, the portico and the area; and by another view you look through the portico into the porch, from whence the prospect is terminated by the woods and mountains which are seen at a distance. On the left hand of this hall, something farther from the sea, lies a large drawing-room, and beyond that, a second of a smaller size, which has one window to the rising, and another to the setting sun: this has likewise a prospect of the sea, but being at a greater distance, is less incommoded by it. The angle which the projection of the hall forms with this drawing-room, retains and increases the warmth of the sun, and hither my family retreat in winter to perform their exercises: it is sheltered from all winds except those which are generally

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ly attended with clouds, so that nothing can render this place useless, but what at the same time destroys the fair weather. Contiguous to this, is a room forming the segment of a circle, the windows of which are so placed as to receive the sun the whole day: in the walls are contrived a sort of cases, which contain a collection of such authors whose works can never be read too often. From hence you pass into a bedchamber through a passage, which being boarded and suspended as it were over a stove which runs underneath, tempers the heat which it receives and conveys to all parts of this room. The remainder of the side of the house, is appropriated to the use of my slaves and freedmen; but however most of the apartments in it are neat enough to entertain any of my friends, who are inclined to be my guests. In the opposite wing is a room ornamented in a very elegant taste; next to which lies another room, which though large for a parlour, makes but a moderate dining-room; it is exceedingly warmed and enlightened not only to the direct rays of the sun, but by their reflection from the sea. Beyond this, is a bedchamber together with its antechamber, the height of which renders it cool in summer, as its being sheltered on all sides from the winds, makes it warm in winter. To this apartment another of the same sort is joined by one common wall. From thence you enter into the grand and spacious *cooling-room* belonging to the baths, from the opposite walls of which two round basins project, large enough to swim in. Contiguous to this is the perfuming-room, then the sweating-room, and beyond that the furnace which conveys the heat to the baths: adjoining are two other little bathing-rooms, which are fitted up in an elegant rather than costly manner: annexed to this, is a warm bath of extraordinary workmanship, wherein one

may swim, and have a prospect at the same time of the sea. Not far from hence stands the tennis-court, which lies open to the warmth of the afternoon sun. From thence you ascend a sort of turret, which contains two entire apartments below; as there are the same number above, besides a dining-room which commands a very extensive prospect of the sea and coast, together with the beautiful villas that stand interspersed upon it. At the other end, is a second turret, containing a room which faces the rising and setting sun. Behind this, is a large room for a repository, near to which is a gallery of curiosities, and underneath, a spacious dining-room, where the roaring of the sea, even in a storm, is heard but faintly: it looks upon the garden and the gestatio, which surrounds the garden. The gestatio is encompassed with a box-tree hedge, and where that is decayed, with rosemary: for the box in those parts which are sheltered by the buildings, preserves its verdure perfectly well; but where by an open situation it lies exposed to the dashing of the sea-water, though at a great distance, it entirely withers. Between the garden and this gestatio runs a shady walk of vines, which is so soft that you may walk bare-foot upon it without any injury. The garden is chiefly planted with fig and mulberry trees, to which this soil is as favourable, as it is averse to all others. In this place is a banqueting-room, which though it stands remote from the sea, enjoys however a prospect nothing inferior to that view: two apartments run round the back part of it, whose windows look upon the entrance of the villa, and into a very pleasant kitchen-garden. From hence an inclosed portico extends itself, which by its grandeur you might take for a public one. It has a range of windows on each side, but on that which looks towards the sea they are double the number

number of those next the garden. When the weather is fair and serene, these are all thrown open; but if it blows, those on the side the wind sits are shut, while the others remain unclosed without any inconvenience. Before this portico lies a terrace perfumed with violets, and warmed by the reflection of the sun from the portico, which as it retains the rays, so it keeps off the north-east wind; and it is as warm on this side, as it is cool on the opposite; in the same manner it is a defence against the south-west, and thus, in short, by means of its several sides, breaks the force of the winds from what point soever they blow. These are some of the winter-advantages of this agreeable situation, which however are still more considerable in the summer; for at that season it throws a shade upon the terrace during all the forenoon, as it defends the gestatio, and that part of the garden which lies contiguous to it, from the afternoon sun, and casts a greater or less shade, as the day either increases or decreases, but the portico itself is then coolest when the sun is most scorching, that is, when its rays fall directly upon the roof. To these advantages I must not forget to add, that, by setting open the windows, the western breezes have a free draught, and by that means the inclosed air is prevented from stagnating. On the upper end of the terrace and portico stands a detached building in the garden, which I call my favourite; and in truth I am extremely fond of it, as I erected it myself. It contains a very warm winter-room, one side of which looks upon the terrace, the other has a view of the sea, and both lie exposed to the sun. Through the folding-doors you see the opposite chamber, and from the window is a prospect of the inclosed portico. On that side next the sea, and opposite to the middle wall, stands a little elegant retired closet, which, by

means of glass doors and a curtain, is either laid into the adjoining room, or separated from it. It contains a couch and two chairs: As you lie upon this couch, from the feet you have a prospect of the sea; if you look behind, you see the neighbouring villas; and from the head you have a view of the woods: these three views may be seen either distinctly from so many different windows in the room, or blended together in one confused prospect. Adjoining to this, is a bedchamber, which neither the voice of the servants, the murmur of the sea, nor even the roaring of a tempest can reach; not lightning nor the day itself can penetrate it, unless you open the windows. This profound tranquillity is occasioned by a passage, which divides the wall of this chamber from that of the garden, and thus, by means of that void intervening space, every noise is drowned. Annexed to this, is a small stove-room, which, by opening a little window, warms the bedchamber to the degree of heat required. Beyond this lies a chamber and antechamber, which enjoys the sun, though obliquely indeed, from the time it rises till the afternoon. When I retire to this garden-apartment, I fancy myself a hundred miles from my own house, and take particular pleasure in it at the feast of the Saturnalia, when, by the licence of that season of joy, every other part of my villa resounds with the mirth of my domestics: thus I neither interrupt their diversions, nor they my studies. Among the pleasures and conveniencies of this situation, there is one disadvantage, and that is, the want of a running stream; but this defect is in a great measure supplied by wells, or rather I should call them springs, for they rise very near the surface. And indeed the quality of this coast is pretty remarkable; for in what part soever you dig, you meet, upon the first turning

turning up of the ground, with a spring of pure water, not in the least salt, though so near the sea. The neighbouring forests afford an abundant supply of fuel; as every other convenience of life may be had from Ostia: to a moderate man, indeed, even the next village (between which and my house there is only one villa) would furnish all common necessaries. In that little place there are no less than three public baths; which is a great conveniency if it happens that my friends come in unexpectedly, or make too short a stay to allow time for preparing my own. The whole coast is beautifully diversified by the joining or detached villas that are spread upon it, which, whether you view them from the sea or the shore, have a much more agreeable effect, than if it were crowded with towns. It is sometimes, after a long calm, good travelling upon the coast, though in general, by the storms driving the waves upon it, it is rough and uneven. I cannot boast that our sea produces any very extraordinary fish; however, it supplies us with exceeding fine soals and prawns: but as to provisions of other kinds, my villa pretends to excel even inland countries, particularly in milk; for thither the cattle come from the meadows in great numbers, in pursuit of shade and water. Tell me now, have I not just cause to bestow my time and my affection upon this delightful retreat? Surely you are unreasonably attached to the pleasures of the town, if you have no inclination to take a view of it; as I much wish you had, that to so many charms with which my favourite villa abounds, it might have the very considerable addition of your presence to recommend it. Farewell.

Epist. XVIII. PLINY to MAURICUS.

WHat more agreeable injunction can you lay upon me, than to desire I would look out for a preceptor to your brother's children? By this kind act you give me an opportunity of revisiting the scene of my education, and of turning back again to the most pleasing part of my life. I take my seat, as formerly, among the young lads, and have the pleasure to experience the respect my character in eloquence meets with from them. I lately came in upon them, while they were warmly declaiming before a very full audience of persons of the first rank; the moment I appeared, they were silent. I mention this for their honour, rather than my own; and to let you see the just hopes you may conceive of placing your nephews here to their advantage. I purpose to hear all the several professors; and when I have done so, I shall write you such an account of them as will enable you (as far as a letter can enable you) to judge of their respective abilities. The faithful execution of this important commission, is what I owe to the friendship that subsists between us, and to the memory of your brother. Nothing, certainly, is more your concern, than that his children (I would have said yours, but that I know you now look upon them even with more tenderness than your own) may be found worthy of such a father, and such an uncle: and I should have claimed a part in that care, though you had not required it of me. I am sensible, in chusing a preceptor, I shall draw upon me the displeasure of all the rest of that profession: but when the interest of these young men is concerned, I esteem it my duty to hazard the displeasure, or even enmity of any man, with as much resolution

tion as a parent would for his own children.
Farewell.

Epist. XIX. PLINY to CEREALIS.

YOU advise me to rehearse my late speech before a large number of my friends. I shall obey, because the command comes from you, though I have many scruples about it. Compositions of this kind lose, I well know, all their fire and force, and even almost their very name, by a plain recital. It is the solemnity of the tribunal, the concourse of one's friends, the expectation of the success, the emulation between the several orators concerned, the different parties formed amongst the audience in their favour; in a word, it is the air, the * motion, the attitude of the speaker, with all the corresponding gestures of his body, which conspire to give a spirit and grace to what he delivers. Hence those who sit when they plead, though they have most of the other advantages I just now mentioned, yet, from that single circumstance, weaken and depress the whole force of their eloquence. The eyes and hands of the reader, those important in-

* Some of the Roman orators were as much too vehement in their action, as those of our country are too calm and spiritless. In the violence of their elocution they not only used all the warmth of gesture, but actually walked backwards and forwards. Tully and Quinctilian have laid down rules how far, and in what instance this liberty was allowable, and both agree, it ought to be used with great caution and judgment. The latter of those excellent critics mentions upon this occasion a witticism of Flavius Virginius, who asked one of these walking orators, *Quot millia passuum declamasset?* "How many miles he had declaimed?" Quinct. inst. ed. Oxon. p. 587.

struments of graceful elocution, being engaged, it is no wonder the hearer grows languid, while he has none of those awakening charms to excite and engage his attention. To these general considerations, I must add this particular disadvantageous circumstance, which attends the speech in question, that it is chiefly of the argumentative kind; and it is natural for an author to suspect, that what he wrote with labour will not be read with pleasure. For who is there so unprejudiced, as not to prefer the flowing and florid oration, to one in this close and unornamented style? It is very unreasonable there should be any difference; however it is certain the judges generally expect one manner of pleading, and the audience another; whereas in truth an auditor ought to be affected only with those things which would strike him, were he in the place of the judge. Nevertheless it is possible the objections which lie against this piece may be got over, in consideration of the novelty it has to recommend it: the novelty I mean with respect to us; for the Greek orators have a method, though upon a different occasion, not altogether unlike what I made use of. They, when they would throw out a law, as contrary to some former one unrepealed, argue by comparing those laws together: so I, on the contrary, endeavoured to shew, that the crime which I was insisting upon as falling within the intent and meaning of the law relating to public extortions, was agreeable, not only to that, but likewise to other laws of the same nature. Those who are not conversant in the laws of their country, can have no taste for reasonings of this kind; but those who are, ought to be so much the more pleased with them. I shall endeavour therefore, if you persist in my reciting it, to collect a judicious audience. But before you determine this point, I entreat you thoroughly to weight the difficulties

difficulties I have laid before you, and then decide as reason shall direct: for it is reason that must justify you: obedience to your commands will be a sufficient apology for me. Farewell.

Epist. XX. PLINY to CALVISIUS.

OPen your purse: I have a story to tell you worth gold; nay I have two or three; for one brings to my mind another. It is no matter which I begin with, so take them as follows. Verania, the widow of Piso who was adopted by Galba, lay extremely ill: upon this occasion Regulus made her a visit. By the way, mark the assurance of the man, to visit a lady to whom he was so extremely odious, and to whose husband he was a declared enemy! Even barely to enter her house would have been impudent enough: but he had the confidence to go much farther, and very familiarly placed himself by her bed's side. He began very gravely with inquiring what day and hour she was born? Being informed of these important particulars, he composes his countenance, fixes his eyes, mutters something to himself, counts his fingers, and all this merely to keep the poor sick lady in suspense. When he had finished this ridiculous mummary, *You are, says he, in one of your climacterics; however, you will get over it. But for your greater satisfaction, I will consult with a certain diviner, whose skill I have frequently experienced.* Accordingly away he goes, consults the omens, and returns with the strongest assurances that they confirmed what he had promised on the part of the stars. Upon this the credulous good woman calls for her will, and gives Regulus a handsome legacy. Some time afterwards her distemper increased; and in her last moments she exclaimed against this infamous wretch who had thus base-

ly.

ly deceived her, though he wished every curse might befall his son, if what he promised her was not true. But such sort of imprecations are as common with Regulus, as they are impious; and he continually devotes that unhappy youth to the curses of those gods, whose vengeance his own frauds every day provoke.

Velleius Blæsus, a person of consular dignity, and remarkable for his immense wealth, in his last sickness had an inclination to make some alterations in his will. Regulus, who had lately endeavoured to insinuate himself into his friendship, hoped to receive some advantage by the intended change, and accordingly applies himself to his physicians, and conjures them to exert all their skill to prolong the poor man's life. But the moment the will was signed, his style was changed: *How long, says he to these very physicians, do you design to keep this man in misery? since you cannot preserve his life, why will you prolong his death?* Blæsus is since dead; and, as if he had overheard every word that Regulus had said, he has not left him one farthing. — And now have you had enough? or, like a truant schoolboy, are you for listening still to another tale? If so, Regulus will supply you. You must know then, that Aurelia, a lady of distinguished accomplishments, designing to execute her will, had dressed herself for that purpose in a very splendid manner. Regulus, who was present as a witness, turned about to the lady, and, *Pray, says he, leave me these fine cloaths.* Aurelia at first thought him in jest: but he insisted upon it very seriously, and obliged her to open her will, and insert this legacy; and though he saw her write it, yet he would not be satisfied till he read the clause himself. However, Aurelia is still alive: though Regulus, no doubt, when he solicited this bequest, expected soon to enjoy it.

it. Thus are legacies and estates conferred upon this abandoned man, as if he really deserved them ! but why should I wonder at this in a city where impudence and iniquity receive the same, do I say, even greater encouragement than modesty and virtue ? Regulus is a glaring instance of this truth, who, from a state of indigence, has, by a train of the most villanous actions, arrived to such immense riches, that he once told me, upon consulting the omens to know how soon he should be worth sixty millions of sesterces, he found them so favourable to him, as to portend he should possess double that sum. And possibly he may, if he continues thus to dictate wills for other people : a sort of fraud, in my estimation, of all others the most infamous. Farewell.

B O O K III.

Epist. I. PLINY to CALVISIUS.

I Cannot recollect, that I ever spent my time more agreeably, than I did lately with Spurrinna. I am so much pleased with the uninterrupted regularity of his way of life, that if ever I should arrive at old age, there is no man whom I would sooner chuse for my model. I look upon order in human actions, especially at that advanced period, with the same sort of pleasure as I behold the settled course of the heavenly bodies. In youth, indeed, there is a certain irregularity and agitation by no means unbecoming : but in age, when business is unseasonable, and ambition indecent, all should be calm and uniform. This rule Spurrinna religiously pursues throughout his whole conduct. Even in those transactions which one might call minute and inconsiderable,

derable, did they not occur every day, he observes a certain periodical season and method. The first part of the morning he devotes to study; at eight he dresses, and walks about three miles, in which he enjoys at once contemplation and exercise. At his return, if he has any friends with him in his house, he enters upon some polite and useful topic of conversation; if he is alone, somebody reads to him; and sometimes too, when he is not, if it is agreeable to his company. When this is over, he reposes himself, and then again either takes up a book, or falls into some discourse even more entertaining and instructive. He afterwards takes the air in his chariot, either with his wife, (who is a lady of uncommon merit), or with some friend: a happiness which lately was mine. — How agreeable, how noble is the enjoyment of him in that hour of privacy! You would fancy you were hearing some worthy of ancient times, inflaming your breast with the most heroic examples, and instructing your mind with the most exalted precepts, which yet he delivers with so modest an air, that there is not the least appearance of dictating in his conversation. When he has thus taken a tour of about seven miles, he gets out of his chariot and walks a mile more; after which he returns home, and either reposes himself, or retires to his study. He has an excellent taste for poetry, and composes in the lyric manner, both in Greek and Latin, with great judgment. It is surprising what an ease and spirit of gaiety runs through his verses, which the merit of the author renders still more valuable. When the baths are ready, which in winter is about three o'clock, and in summer about two, he undresses himself; and if there happens to be no wind, he walks for some time in the sun. After this he plays a considerable time at tennis: for,

for, by this sort of exercise too, he combats the effects of old age. When he has bathed, he throws himself upon his couch till supper-time, and in the mean while some agreeable and entertaining author is read to him. In this, as in all the rest, his friends are at full liberty to partake; or to employ themselves in any other manner more suitable to their taste. You sit down to an elegant, yet frugal repast, which is served up in pure and antique plate. He has likewise a complete equipage for his side-board, in Corinthian metal, which is his pleasure, not his passion. At his table he is frequently entertained with comedians, that even his very amusements may be seasoned with good sense; and though he continues there, even in summer, till the night is something advanced, yet he prolongs the feast with so much affability and politeness, that none of his guests ever think it tedious. By this method of living he has preserved all his senses entire, and his body active and vigorous to his 78th year, without discovering any appearance of old age, but the wisdom. This is the sort of life which I ardently aspire after; as I purpose to enjoy it, when I shall arrive at those years which will justify a retreat from business. In the mean while, I am embarrassed with a thousand affairs, in which Spurrinna is at once my support and my example. As long as it became him, he entered into all the duties of public life. It was by passing through the various offices of the state, by governing of provinces, and by indefatigable toil, that he merited the repose he now enjoys. I propose to myself the same course and the same end: and I give it to you under my hand that I do so. If an ill-timed ambition should carry me beyond it, produce this letter against me; and condemn me to repose, whenever I can enjoy

joy it without being reproached with indolence. Farewell.

Epist. II. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

WHAT I should readily have offered to your friends, if I were in your station, I think I may claim a right to request for mine. Arrianus Maturius is a person of the most considerable rank among the * Altinates. When I call him so, it is not with respect to his fortunes (which however are very considerable); it is in view to the purity, the integrity, the prudence, and the gravity of his manners. His counsel steers me in my affairs, and his judgment directs me in my studies; for truth, honour, and knowledge, are the shining qualities which mark his character. He loves me (and I cannot express his affection in stronger terms) with a tenderness equal to yours. As he is a stranger to the passion of ambition, he is contented with remaining in the equestrian order, when he might easily have advanced himself into a higher rank. It behoves me however to take care his merit be rewarded with the honours it deserves; and I would fain without his knowledge or expectation, and probably too contrary to his inclination, add to his dignity. The post I would obtain for him should be something very honourable, and yet attended with no trouble. I beg when any thing of that nature offers, you would think of him; it will be an obligation, which both he and I shall ever remember with the greatest gratitude. For though he has no aspiring wishes to satisfy, he will be as sensible of the favour, as if he had received it in consequence of his own desires. Farewell.

* Altino in the Venetian territories, now destroyed.

Epist. III. PLINY to HISPULLA.

I AM in doubt, whether I most loved or admired that great and good man your father; but this is most certain, that, in respect to his memory and your virtues, I have the greatest affection for you. Can I fail then to wish (as I shall by every means in my power endeavour) that your son may copy the virtues of both his grandfathers, particularly his maternal? as indeed his father and his uncle will furnish him also with very illustrious examples. The surest method to train him up in the steps of these valuable men, is early to season his mind with polite learning and useful knowledge: and it is of the last consequence from whom he receives these instructions. Hitherto he has had his education under your eye, and in your house, where he is exposed to few, I should rather say to no wrong impressions. But he is now of an age to be sent from home, and it is time to place him with some professor of rhetoric; of whose discipline and method, but above all of whose morals, you may be well satisfied. Amongst the many advantages for which this amiable youth is indebted to nature and fortune, he has that of a most beautiful person: it is necessary therefore, in this loose and slippery age, to find out one who will not only be his tutor, but his guardian and his guide. I will venture to recommend Julius Genitor to you under that character. I love him, I confess, extremely: but my affection does by no means prejudice my judgment; on the contrary it is, in truth, the effect of it. His behaviour is grave, and his morals irreproachable; perhaps something too severe and rigid for the libertine manners of these times. His qualifications in his profession you may learn from many others: for the art of

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eloquence,

eloquence, as it is open to all the world, is soon discovered; but the qualities of the heart lie more concealed, and out of the reach of common observation; and it is on that side I undertake to be answerable for my friend. Your son will hear nothing from this worthy man, but what will be for his advantage to know, nor learn any thing of which it would be happier he should be ignorant. He will represent to him as often, and with as much zeal as you or I should, the virtues of his family, and what a glorious weight of characters he has to support. You will not hesitate then to place him with a tutor, whose first care will be to form his manners, and afterwards to instruct him in eloquence; an attainment ill-acquired if with the neglect of moral improvements. Farewell.

Epist. IV. PLINY to MACRINUS.

THough both my friends who were present, and the generality of people, seem to approve of my conduct in the affair I am going to mention, yet I cannot satisfy myself without knowing your sentiments; and as I wished for your advice before I engaged in it, so I am extremely desirous of your judgment now it is over. Having obtained leave to be absent from my office as head of the treasury, I went into Tuscany to look after some works which I am carrying on there for the benefit of that province, at my own expense. In the interval, deputies on the part of the *Pænici* arrived, with complaints of some grievances they had suffered under the government of *Cæcilius Classicus*; and applied to the senate that I might be appointed counsel for them. My very worthy and obliging colleagues represented on my behalf, the necessary engagements of our office, and endeavoured all they could

could to get me excused. Upon this the senate passed a decree greatly to my honour: they ordered that I should be counsel for the province, provided the deputies could obtain my consent. At my return they were again introduced into the senate, and there renewed their petition in my presence. They conjured me by that generous assistance I had given them in their cause against *Bæbius*, and by all the obligations I lay under of supporting my avowed clients, that I would not now desert them. I perceived the senate was inclined to grant this petition, by that general assent which is the usual forerunner of all their decrees. Whereupon I rose up and told the house, that I no longer insisted upon the reasonableness of the excuse I had alleged: and they were pleased with the respectful modesty of my answer. I was determined in this resolution, not only because I found it agreeable to the inclinations of the senate (which indeed had great weight with me), but for many other, though less important considerations. I reflected, that our ancestors thought themselves obliged to engage voluntarily in defence of those particular persons, with whom they were united by the laws of hospitality, and that therefore it would be highly ungenerous to abandon a collective body, to whom I stood in the same relation. Besides, I considered the danger as well as the fatigue I went through in the last cause I undertook for this province, and I was unwilling to lose the merit of my former services, by denying them this. For such is the disposition of mankind, the favour you refuse, cancels all you have conferred; and though you oblige them ever so often, they will forget a thousand compliances, and yet remember a single denial. I considered likewise, that *Clælius* being dead, the great objection of exposing a senator, was removed; and

that in undertaking this defence, I should merit the same thanks as if he were alive, without the hazard of giving any particular offence. In a word, I thought if I complied with their desires in this instance, I could with a better grace deny my assistance to them in any future cause, where I might have personal reasons for declining to be their counsel. For all our offices have their limits; and the best way of reserving to ourselves the liberty of refusing where we would, is to comply where we can. Thus you have heard the motives which influenced me in this transaction: it now remains that you give me your sentiments, which I shall receive with equal pleasure, either as an instance of your sincerity, or a sanction to my conduct. Farewell.

Epist. V. PLINY to MACER.

I AM extremely pleased, that you read my uncle's books so diligently, as to wish to have a complete collection of them; and for that purpose desire me to send you an account of all the treatises he wrote. I will point them out to you in the order in which they were composed: for however immaterial that may seem, it is a sort of information not at all unacceptable to men of letters. The first book he published was, a treatise concerning the *art of using a javelin on horseback*: this he wrote when he commanded a troop of horse, and it is drawn up with great accuracy and judgment. *The life of Pomponius Secundus, in two volumes*: Pomponius had a very great affection for him, and he thought he owed this tribute to his memory. *The history of the wars in Germany, twenty books*, in which he gave an account of all the battles we were engaged in against that nation. A dream which he had when he served in the army in Germany, first suggested to him
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the design of this work. He imagined that Drusus Nero (who extended his conquests very far into that country, and there lost his life) appeared to him in his sleep, and conjured him not to suffer his memory to be buried in oblivion. He has left us likewise a *treatise upon eloquence*, divided into six volumes. In this work he takes the orator from his cradle, and leads him on till he has carried him up to the highest point of perfection in this art. In the latter part of Nero's reign, when the tyranny of the times made it dangerous to engage in studies of a more free and elevated spirit, he published a piece of criticism in eight books, concerning ambiguity in expression. He has completed the history which Aufidius Bassus left unfinished, and has added to it thirty books. And lastly, he has left thirty-seven books upon the subject of natural history: this is a work of great compass and learning, and almost as full of variety as nature herself. You will wonder how a man so engaged as he was, could find time to compose such a number of books; and some of them too upon abstruse subjects. But your surprise will rise still higher, when you hear, that for some time he engaged in the profession of an advocate, that he died in his fifty-sixth year, that from the time of his quitting the bar to his death he was employed in the execution of the highest posts, and in the service of his prince. But he had a quick apprehension, joined to unwearied application. In summer he always began his studies as soon as it was night; in winter generally at one in the morning, but never later than two, and often at midnight. No man ever spent less time in bed, insomuch that he would sometimes, without retiring from his book, take a short sleep, and then pursue his studies. Before day-break he used to wait upon Vespasian; who likewise chose that season

season to transact business. When he had finished the affairs which that emperor committed to his charge, he returned home again to his studies. After a short and light repast at noon (agreeably to the good old custom of our ancestors) he would frequently in the summer, if he was disengaged from business, repose himself in the sun; during which time some author was read to him, from whence he made extracts and observations, as indeed this was his constant method whatever book he read: for it was a maxim of his, that “no book was so bad, but something might be learned from it.” When this was over, he generally went into the cold bath, and as soon as he came out of it, just took a slight refreshment, and then reposed himself for a little while. Thus, as if it had been a new day, he immediately resumed his studies till supper-time, when a book was again read to him, upon which he would make some hasty remarks. I remember once his *reader* having pronounced a word wrong, somebody at the table made him repeat it again; upon which my uncle asked his friend if he understood it? Who acknowledging that he did; *Why then,* said he, *would you make him go back again? We have lost by this interruption above ten lines:* so covetous was this great man of time! In summer he always rose from supper by day-light; and in winter as soon as it was dark: and this was an invariable law with him. Such was his manner of life amidst the noise and hurry of the town; but in the country his whole time was devoted to study without intermission, excepting only when he bathed. But in this exception I include no more than the time he was actually in the bath; for all the while he was rubbed and wiped, he was employed either in hearing some book read to him, or in dictating himself. In his journeys he lost no time from his studies, but his

his mind at those seasons being disengaged from all other thoughts, applied itself wholly to that single pursuit. A secretary constantly attended him in his chariot, who, in the winter, wore a particular sort of warm gloves, that the sharpness of the weather might not occasion any interruption to his studies : and for the same reason my uncle always used a chair in Rome. I remember he once reproved me for walking : “ You might,” said he, “ employ those hours to more advantage :” for he thought all was time lost, that was not given to study. By this extraordinary application he found time to write so many volumes, besides one hundred and sixty which he left me, consisting of a kind of common-place, written on both sides, in a very small character ; so that one might fairly reckon the number considerably more. I have heard him say, when he was comptroller of the revenue in Spain, Largius Licinius offered him four hundred thousand * sesterces for these manuscripts : and yet they were not then quite so numerous. When you reflect upon the books he has read, and the volumes he has wrote, are you not inclined to suspect that he never was engaged in the affairs of the public, or the service of his prince ? On the other hand, when you are informed how indefatigable he was in his studies, are you not disposed to wonder that he read and wrote no more ? For, on one side, what obstacles would not the business of a court throw in his way ? And on the other what is it that such intense application might not perform ? I cannot but smile therefore when I hear myself called a studious man, who in comparison to him am a mere loiterer. But why do I mention myself, who am diverted from these pursuits, by numberless affairs both public and private ? Even they whose whole lives are en-

* About 3200 l. of our money.

gaged in study, must blush when placed in the same view with him.—I have run out my letter, I perceive, beyond the extent I at first designed, which was only to inform you, as you desired, what treatises he has left behind him. But I trust this will not be less acceptable to you than the books themselves, as it may possibly not only raise your curiosity to read his works, but your emulation to copy his example, by some attempts of the same nature. Farewell.

Epist VI. PLINY to SEVERUS.

I Have lately bought, with a legacy that was left me, a statue of Corinthian brass. It is small indeed, but handsome and done to the life, at least if I have any judgment; which most certainly in matters of this sort, as perhaps in all others, is extremely defective. However, I think I have a taste to discover the beauties of this figure: as it is naked, the faults, if there be any, as well as the perfections, are more observable. It represents an old man in a standing posture. The bones, the muscles, the veins, and wrinkles are so strongly expressed, that you would imagine the figure to be animated. The character is well preserved throughout every part of the body: the hair is thin, the forehead broad, the face shrivelled, the throat lank, the arms languid, the breast fallen, and the belly sunk; as the whole turn and air of the figure behind, is expressive of old age. It appears to be antique from the colour of the brass. In short, it is a performance so highly finished as to merit the attention of the most curious, and to afford at the same time pleasure to the most common observer: and this induced me, who am a mere novice in this art, to buy it. But I did so, not with any intent of placing it in
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my own house, (for I have nothing of that kind there), but with a design of fixing it in some conspicuous place in my native province, perhaps in the temple of Jupiter : for it is a present well worthy of a temple and a god. I desire therefore you would, with that care with which you always execute my requests, give immediate orders for a pedestal to be made for it. I leave the choice of the marble to you, but let my name be engraven upon it, and, if you think proper, my titles. I will send the statue by the first opportunity ; or possibly (which I am sure you will like better) I may bring it myself : for I intend, if I can find leisure, to make an excursion to you. This is a piece of news which I know you will rejoice to hear ; but you will soon change your countenance when I tell you, my visit will be only for a few days : for the same business that now detains me here, will prevent my making a longer stay. Farewell.

Epist. VII. PLINY to CANINIUS.

I AM just now told, that Silius Italicus has starved himself to death, at his country-house near Naples. The cause was his ill health. Having been afflicted with an imposthume which was deemed incurable, he grew weary of life under such uneasy circumstances, and therefore put an end to it, with the most determined courage. He had been extremely fortunate through the whole course of his days, excepting only the loss of his younger son ; however, that was made up to him in the satisfaction of seeing his eldest, who is of a more amiable character, attain the consular dignity, and of leaving him in a very flourishing situation. He suffered a little in his reputation in the time of Nero, having been suspected of forwardly joining in some of
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the informations which were carried on in the reign of that prince ; but he made use of his interest in Vitellius, with great discretion and humanity. He acquired much honour by his administration of the government of Asia ; and by his approved behaviour after his retirement from business, cleared his character from that stain which his former intrigues had thrown upon it. He lived among the nobility of Rome, without power, and consequently without envy. Though he frequently was confined to his bed, and always to his chamber, yet he was highly respected and much visited ; not with a view to his wealth, but merely on account of his merit. He employed his time between conversing with men of letters, and composing of verses ; which he sometimes recited, in order to try the sentiments of the public : but he discovered in them more industry than genius. In the decline of his years he entirely quitted Rome, and lived altogether in Campania, from whence even the accession of the new emperor could not draw him. A circumstance which I mention as well to the honour of the prince, who was not displeased with that liberty, as of Italicus, who was not afraid to make use of it. He was reproached with being fond of all the elegancies of the fine arts to a degree of excess. He had several villas in the same province, and the last purchase was always the chief favourite, to the neglect of the rest. They were all furnished with large collections of books, statues, and pictures, which he more than enjoyed, he even adored ; particularly that of Virgil, of whom he was so passionate an admirer, that he celebrated the anniversary of that poet's birthday with more solemnity than his own ; especially at Naples, where he used to approach his tomb with as much reverence as if it had been a temple. In
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this tranquillity he lived to the seventy-fifth year of his age, with a delicate, rather than a sickly constitution. It is remarkable, that as he was the last person upon whom Nero conferred the consular office, (that prince being killed during his consulship), so he was the last also that survived of all those who had been raised by him to that dignity. When I consider this, I cannot forbear lamenting the transitory condition of mankind. Is there any thing in nature so short and limited as human life, even in its most extended period? Does it not seem to you, my friend, but yesterday, that Nero was upon the throne? and yet not one of all those who were consuls in his reign now remains! But why should I wonder at an event so common? Lucius Piso (the father of that Piso who was infamously assassinated by Valerius Festus in Africa) used to say, he did not see one person in the senate who sat in that house when he was consul: such multitudes are swept away in so short a space! I am therefore so far from thinking those tears of Xerxes need any apology, that in my judgment history does honour to his character, which informs us, that when this prince had attentively surveyed his immense army, he could not refrain from weeping, with the thought that so many thousand lives would so soon be extinct. The more ardent therefore should our zeal be to lengthen out this short portion of existence, by acquisitions of glory, if not in the active scenes of life, (which is not always in our own power), yet however in those of study and contemplation; and since it is not granted us to live long, let us transmit to posterity some memorial that we have at least lived. I well know, you want not any incitement to virtue; but the warmth of my affection for you, inclines me to forward you in the course you already

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ready pursue ; as I have often found myself encouraged by your generous exhortations. How glorious is the contention, when two friends thus strive who shall animate each other most in their pursuits of immortal fame ! Farewell.

Epist. VIII. PLINY to TRANQUILLUS.

YOU act agreeably to that regard with which you always entreat, by so earnest a solicitation, that I would confer the military tribunate upon your relation, Cæsennius Silvanus, which I had obtained of the most illustrious Neratius Marcellus for yourself. As it would have given me great pleasure to have seen you in that post, so it will not be less acceptable to me to have it bestowed upon one whom you recommend. For hardly, I think, would it be consistent to wish a man advanced to honours, and yet envy him a title far nobler than any other he can receive, even that of a generous and an affectionate relation. To deserve and to grant favours, is the fairest point of view in which we can be placed ; and this amiable character will be yours, if you resign to your friend, what is due to your own merit. I must acknowledge at the same time, I am by this means advancing my own reputation, as the world will learn from hence, that my friends not only have it in their power to enjoy such an honourable post, but to dispose of it. I readily therefore comply with your generous request ; and as your name is not yet entered upon the roll, I can without difficulty insert Silvanus's in its stead : and may he accept this good office at your hands with the same grateful disposition that I am sure you will receive mine. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. IX. PLINY to MINUTIANUS.

I Can now give you a full account of the great fatigue I underwent in the public cause of the province of Bætica ; a cause which turned upon a variety of facts, and took up several days. Cæcilius Classicus was governor of Bætica, the year that Marius Priscus enjoyed the same honour in Africa. Cæcilius was a man of a base abandoned character, and had exercised his authority with great violence and oppression. He was a native of Africa, as Priscus was of Bætica ; in allusion to which these people used archly to say, (as resentment often gives a certain agreeable sprightliness), *we are paid in our own coin*. The only difference between them was, that Marius was prosecuted by a single city, and several private persons ; whereas the charge against Classicus was brought by the whole united province of Bætica. He escaped, however, the consequences of this impeachment, either by an accidental or voluntary death, I know not which. It is certain at least, the world threw upon him the imputation of the latter ; though I must confess that point is to me extremely doubtful. For as, on the one hand, it is in general reasonable to suppose, that any man should rather chuse to die, than be arraigned of a crime which he could not clear himself of ; so, on the other, it is surprising, that he who was not ashamed to commit so base an action, should yet have courage enough to prefer death to the disgrace of a public conviction. Nevertheless, the Bætici persisted in going on with the prosecution. This privilege, of which the laws admit, was now, after long dispute, revived in the present instance. They went farther, and insisted that his accomplices should likewise be proceeded against at the same time. I

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was counsel for the province, together with Lucceius Albinus, who was joined with me. He is a copious and elegant orator ; and though I always loved him, yet being associated with him in this cause, has considerably heightened my affection for him. There is something in the pursuit of fame, especially of the eloquent kind, that is selfish, unsociable, and jealous of participation ; but there was no rivalry between us, and we united our joint efforts in the management of this cause, without giving into any separate or private views of our own. We thought the point in question was of too much importance, and of too complicated a nature, for each of us to be limited to a single speech. We were apprehensive we should neither have strength, nor time, to make good our charge against so many parties, if we comprised them all under one general accusation. Such a variety of persons and facts would be apt to confound, as well as weary the attention of the judges. Besides, in that collective way of proceeding, either the interest of some might prove a protection to all the rest ; or the most inconsiderable of the party might be sacrificed to the justice of their country, in order to favour the escape of those of a more conspicuous rank, for partiality never exerts itself with more success, than when it is concealed under the specious appearance of severity. We remembered the advice of Sertorius, who directed the strongest soldier to tear off the horse's tail at once, and the weakest to pull it off hair by hair.—But you know the story. In the same manner we thought we had no other way to cope with such a numerous body of criminals, but by attacking them singly. Our first and principal point was to prove Clasicus guilty, which would prepare the way to his accomplices ; for till that was done, it would not be possible to fix any thing upon them.

them. Amongst these we singled out Bæbius Probus, and Fabius Hispanus, whom we thought proper to join with Classicus: these persons were considerable by their interest, and Hispanus in particular by his eloquence. There was no difficulty in proving the charge against Classicus, for there was found among his papers an account under his own hand of the several sums he had taken, and upon what occasions. A letter was also produced which he sent to one of his mistresses at Rome, wherein he expresses himself in these words: *Rejoice with me, for I am preparing to return to you; and in such a manner as to have nothing to fear from my creditors, having raised four millions of sesterces upon the Bætici.* But it cost us much time and pains to make good the articles against Hispanus and Probus. Before I came to the particular crimes alleged against them, I thought it extremely necessary to prove, that to be the agents and ministers of a governor in matters manifestly unjust, was in itself criminal. For they did not pretend to deny the fact, but pleaded in their excuse, that they were officers under Classicus, and therefore obliged to obey his orders. Claudius Restitutus, who was counsel on their side, assured me, he never was more perplexed and confounded than when he perceived I had seized this post, in which he had placed all his strength and confidence; though no man is more expert and vigilant in his profession, or more prepared against a surprise. The senate decreed, that an account should be taken of what effects Classicus was possessed of before he went into his government, which should be given to his daughter, and directed the overplus to be divided among the unhappy sufferers. The decree added farther, that his creditors should refund whatever monies they had received since his return. Hispanus and Probus were sentenced to,

be banished for five years: so very atrocious did that conduct now appear, which seemed at first to be doubted whether it was criminal or not. A few days afterwards we proceeded against Clavius Fuscus, who married the daughter of Classicus, and Stillonius Priscus, who commanded a troop under him; but with very different success: for the former was acquitted, and the latter banished Italy for two years. At the third hearing, we thought it advisable to join several accomplices in one general charge, lest by protracting this affair any longer, even justice herself should be quite spent and worn out. We had indeed designedly reserved the most inconsiderable of the persons concerned to this day; the wife of Classicus only excepted, against whom, though there was strong suspicion, the proofs were by no means thought clear: as to his daughter, who was likewise in the number of the accused, there was not the least ground to charge any thing upon her. When therefore in the conclusion of the pleadings I was to take notice of her, I thought it would ill become me to bear hard upon one who appeared to be innocent; and therefore I spoke very fully and freely in her favour, as there was now no danger that this would take off from the weight of the accusation, as it might have done if I had mentioned it in the outset of the cause. I addressed myself to the deputies, and desired they would tell me if they had any thing to allege against her, which they thought they could prove; and appealed to the senate whether I ought to employ my eloquence, if in truth I had any, to the destruction of the innocent: and I concluded with saying, *But perhaps I shall be asked, if I take upon myself to act as a judge? By no means: I consider myself however as an advocate chosen out from amidst that venerable body.*

Thus

Thus ended this cause, in which so many parties were concerned, some of whom were acquitted, but the greater number condemned, either to perpetual banishment, or for a limited time. The senate were pleased in the same decree to honour us with a very ample testimony in our favour, by expressing their approbation of our diligent, faithful, and resolute behaviour in the management of this trial: the only reward equal to so laborious a task. You will easily conceive the fatigue we underwent in speaking and debating so long and so often, and in examining, assisting, and confuting such a number of witnesses; as well as what a difficult and disagreeable task we had, to withstand the private solicitations and public opposition of the friends of the accused. To give you an instance: One of the judges themselves, who thought I pressed too hard upon a party whom he favoured, could not forbear interrupting me; *Give me leave*, said I, *to go on; for when I have said all I can, he will still be as innocent, as he was before.* From hence you will collect what a scene of contention I went through, and what enemies I brought upon myself. However, it was but for a season. For though honesty may for the time offend those it opposes, yet it will at last be justified and admired, even by the very persons who suffer from it.

Thus I have laid before you, in the clearest manner I am able, this whole transaction. You will regret, perhaps, the reading so long a letter, and tell me it was scarce worth the trouble. Ask me then no more what is doing at Rome; and remember, in my excuse, that considering the time this trial took up, the great number of persons concerned, and the several proceedings against them, my letter is of no unreasonable length: and I really think I have related the whole with as much brevity as exactness.—But upon recollection

lection I find I must recall that last word ; for I perceive, a little too late indeed, that I have omitted a material circumstance. However, I will mention it here, though something out of its place. In this I have the authority of Homer, and several other great names to keep me in countenance ; and the critics will tell you this irregular manner has its beauties : but, upon my word, it is a beauty I had not at all in my view. One of the witnesses, whether in resentment that he was summoned contrary to his inclination, or that he was suborned by some of the parties accused to weaken the credit of the charge, desired leave to exhibit articles against Norbanus Licinianus, one of the deputies, and a commissioner appointed to carry on the present prosecution, alleging, that he had prevaricated in his charge against Casta, the wife of Clasticus. The laws direct, that the party accused shall be first proceeded against, before any information shall be received to the prejudice of the person who brings the charge ; because, how far he is to be credited will best appear from the accusation itself. But so extremely odious was Norbanus, that neither the authority of the laws, nor a regard to his public function, could protect him. He was a man of an infamous character, who, like many others, had used his interest with Domitian to very vile purposes. He was appointed one of the commissioners by the province to manage this trial, not because they had any opinion of his integrity, but as being a declared enemy to Clasticus, by whom he had been banished. Norbanus desired he might have time allowed him for his defence, and a copy of the articles of his accusation. Both which were refused him, and he was ordered to answer immediately to the charge. He did so ; and when I consider his character, I know not whether I should say with great impudence, or
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great courage, but undoubtedly with great readiness. There were many things alleged against him, much more to his disadvantage than the crime with which he was particularly charged. Among the rest, Pomponius Rufus, and Libo Frugi, persons of consular dignity, deposed, that he was counsel, in the reign of Domitian, for those infamous wretches who had informed against Salvius Liberalis. In short, Norbanus was condemned and banished. When therefore I came to speak against Casta, I insisted singly upon this sentence against Norbanus. But I urged this to little purpose; for, by a very unprecedented and indeed a contradictory way of proceeding, the person accused was acquitted, while he who had entered into this combination in her favour, was condemned. You will be curious to be informed how we, who were counsel against her, acted in this extraordinary conjuncture. We acquainted the senate, that as we had received all our instructions from Norbanus, we could not, if he should be convicted of collusion with this woman, proceed without new ones. After this, during all his trial, we sat down, without intermeddling in the affair. Norbanus, after his conviction, continued present throughout the whole proceedings, and preserved the same resolution, or impudence to the last. And here, upon reviewing my letter, I find I have been guilty of another omission. I should have told you, that Salvius Liberalis inveighed strongly against the rest of the deputies, insisting, that they had betrayed the trust reposed in them by the province, and had not brought to justice all the parties they were directed to prosecute. As he is a man of great warmth of temper and much eloquence, they were really in some danger. But I took those worthy persons under my protection, and they are so grateful as to acknowledge I saved them
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from the storm with which they were threatened. And now, my friend, I will put an end to my letter in good earnest; and will not detain you with adding a syllable more, even though I should find some circumstances have still escaped me. Farewell.

Epist. X. PLINY to SPURINNA and COCCIA *.

WHen I paid my last visit to you, I did not acquaint you, that I had composed something in praise of your son; because it was not written for the sake of ostentation, but merely as a private tribute of affection to his memory, and as a consolation to me in my concern for the loss of him. Besides, my dear Spurrinna, as you told me you heard I had recited, I imagined you were informed at the same time of the subject; and I was unwilling to cast a gloom upon your cheerfulness in that season of gaiety in which I found you, by recalling to your remembrance so severe a misfortune. I have even still some doubt, whether I should only send you what I then recited, or join with it what I design for another essay: for a single tract was not only insufficient to give due scope to the sentiments of my heart, and to comprise the full offerings I would pay to one whose memory I so infinitely love and honour; but it seemed also more for the interest of his fame, to have it thus spread by separate pieces. But the consideration, that it will be treating you with a more friendly openness to transmit to you the whole now, rather than reserve part of it to another time, has determined me to do so; especially as you have assured me you will not part with it out of your hands, till I think proper to send it abroad. I beg you would give me an in-

* Spurrinna's wife.

stance of the same unreserved freedom, by pointing out to me what you shall judge would be best altered, omitted, or added. It is difficult (and I know it by what I feel myself) for a mind in affliction to attend to such little cares. However, as you would direct a painter or statuary who was representing the figure of your son, what parts he would retouch or express, so I hope you will guide and inform my hand in this more durable, or (as you are pleased to think it) this immortal picture of his mind, which I am endeavouring to draw : for the nearer it shall resemble the original, and the more finished it shall be, so much the more lasting it is likely to prove. Farewell.

Epist. XI. PLINY to JULIUS GENITOR.

IT is the generous disposition of our friend Artemidorus to exaggerate the good offices of his friends ; and in that light you must look upon those strong professions he makes of his obligations to me. It is true, indeed, when the philosophers were expelled Rome, I went to see him at his house near the city, and I ran the greater hazard in paying him that visit, as I was at that time prætor. I likewise supplied him with a considerable sum to discharge some debts he had contracted upon very glorious occasions, though I was obliged to borrow the money myself ; while his other friends, who both in power and fortune were capable of assisting him, stood calmly at a distance without contributing any relief to his distress. This I did under the discouraging instances before my eyes of the sufferings of even of my friends ; Senecio, Rusticus, and Helvidus being just then put to death, at the same time that Mauricus, Gratilla, Arria, and Fannia were sent into exile. And scorched as I
was

was with the lightning of the state, which thus flashed round me, I had great reason to expect it would not be long before it destroyed me too. But I do not esteem myself upon that account, as meriting the high encomiums my friend bestows upon me: all I pretend to is, that I was not guilty of the infamous meanness of abandoning him in his misfortunes. I had, as far as the difference of our ages would admit, a friendship for his father-in-law Musonius, whom I both loved and esteemed. Artemidorus himself I made acquaintance with, when I was military tribune in Syria, where I entered into the strictest intimacy with him. And I value myself upon having given this first mark of something right in my disposition, that I so early discovered the merit of this amiable man, who if he is not a philosopher, exceedingly resembles one; I am sure at least, of all those who take upon themselves that title, I know none of a more sincere and unaffected integrity. I forbear to mention how patient he is of heat and cold, how indefatigable in labour, how abstemious in the pleasures of the table, and how absolutely he restrains all his appetites; for these qualities, considerable as they would certainly be in any other character, are rendered less conspicuous to him, by the superior lustre of those more extraordinary virtues which recommended him to Musonius for a son-in-law, in preference to so many others of all ranks who paid their addresses to his daughter. I cannot therefore but be highly sensible of the advantageous terms in which he speaks of me to every body, and particularly to you. But I am apprehensive (to return to the observation with which I set out), that the warmth of his generous benevolence may carry him beyond the bounds I deserve: for he, who is so free from all other errors, is extremely apt to fall into this good-natured

tured one, of over-rating the merit of his friends.
Farewell.

Epist. XII. PLINY to CATILIUS.

I Will accept of your invitation to sup with you, but upon this express condition, that the supper be short and frugal. Let our entertainment, like the conversation of Socrates, abound only in philosophical conference; and even that too with moderation. There are certain midnight parties, which Cato himself could not safely fall in with; though I must confess at the same time, that J. Cæsar, when he reproaches him upon that head, exalts the character he endeavours to expose: for he describes those persons who met this reeling patriot, as blushing when they discovered who he was; and adds, *You would have thought, that Cato had detected them, and not they Cato.* Could he place the dignity of Cato in a stronger light, than by representing him thus venerable, even in his cups? As for ourselves nevertheless, let temperance not only spread our table, but regulate our hours: for we are not arrived at so high a reputation, that our enemies cannot censure us but to our honour. Farewell.

Epist. XIII. PLINY to ROMANUS.

IN compliance with your desire, I have sent you the panegyric I spoke, when lately consul, in honour of the best of princes, and I would have done so, though you had not demanded it. I could wish when you peruse it, you would consider the difficulty, as well as the dignity of the subject. In other compositions, where the reader is not acquainted with the subject, the novelty of it engages his chief attention; but in a to-

pic so known and exhausted as this, he has nothing to divert him from considering the style and manner of his author, which he is at full leisure to contemplate: and the writer has a hard task to please his readers, when the whole force of their criticism is directed to that single point. But I should be glad they would have in view the disposition, the figures, and connections I have observed in this discourse. A strong imagination, and pompous expression will sometimes break out in the most unpolished writer; but regularity in the plan of a work, and propriety in the figures, is the distinguishing mark and particular privilege of an improved genius. The shining and the elevated is not always to be pursued. As shades in a picture shew the luminous parts to more advantage, so the plain and simple in writing recommends and heightens the sublime. But I forget that I am talking to one who is so complete a judge of these matters. I should rather beg of you to point out to me what you shall think requires correction: for if I find you dislike some parts, I shall be more inclined to believe you approve of the rest. Farewell.

Epist. XIV. PLINY to ACILIUS.

THE barbarous manner in which Largius Macedo, a person of prætorian rank, has been lately treated by his slaves, is so extremely tragical, that it deserves to be the subject of something more considerable than a private letter; though at the same time it must be acknowledged, there was a haughtiness and severity in his treatment of them, which shewed him little mindful that his own father was once in the same station. They surrounded him as he was bathing, at his villa near Formiæ, and some beat him about the face and head, whilst others tram-
pled

pled upon his breast, his belly, and his privy parts: when they imagined they had thus completed their intentions, they threw him upon the burning pavement of the hot bath, to try if there was any remaining life left in him. He lay there stretched out, and motionless, either as really senseless, or counterfeiting to be so; upon which they concluded him actually dead. In this condition they brought him out, pretending that he had fainted away by the heat of the bath. Some of his more trusty servants received him, and the alarm being spread through the family, his mistresses ran to him with the most violent shrieks. The noise of their cries, together with the fresh air, brought him a little to himself, and he gave signs, (as he now safely might), that he was not quite dead. The murderers immediately made their escape; but the greater part of them are taken, and they are in pursuit of the rest. By proper application he was, with great difficulty, kept alive for a few days, and then expired; having however the satisfaction before he died of seeing just vengeance inflicted on his assassins. Thus you see to what indignities, outrages, and dangers we are exposed. Lenity and good treatment is no security from the villanies of your servants; for it is malice, and not reflection that arms such ruffians against their masters. — So much for this piece of news: and now, I think, I am exhausted. But you will be apt, I imagine, to ask, “Is this all?” In truth it is; otherwise, you should have it; for my paper and my time too (as it is a holyday with me) will allow me to add more. Upon recollection, however, I can tell you one farther circumstance relating to Macedo, which just now occurs to me. As he was once in a public bath at Rome, a remarkable, and (as it should seem by the manner of his death) an ominous accident happened to

him. A slave of Macedo's, in order to make way for his master, laid his hand gently upon a Roman knight, who suddenly turning round, by mistake gave Macedo so violent a blow, that he almost knocked him down. Thus the bath seems to have been fatal to him by a kind of gradation; for first he received an indignity, and afterwards lost his life there. Farewell.

Epist. XV. PLINY to PROCUS.

YOU desire me to read your poems in my retirement, and to examine whether they are worthy of being published. You use entreaties; you quote authorities; and you ask me to subtract some spare time from my own studies, to bestow it upon yours. You farther add, that Tully was remarkable for his generous encouragement and patronage of poetical geniuses. But you did not do me justice, if you supposed I wanted either entreaty or example upon this occasion, who not only honour the muses with the most religious regard, but have also the warmest friendship for yourself: I shall therefore do what you require, with as much pleasure as care. I believe I may venture to declare beforehand, that your performance is extremely beautiful, and ought by no means to be suppressed; at least that was my opinion when I heard you recite it: if indeed your manner did not impose upon me; for the skill and harmony of your elocution is certainly enchanting. I trust however, the charming cadence did not entirely overcome the force of my criticism; it might possibly a little soften its severity, but could not totally, I imagine, disarm me of it. I think therefore I may now safely pronounce my opinion of your poems in general; what they are in their several parts, I shall judge when I read them. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XVI. PLINY to NEPOS.

I Have constantly observed, that amongst the noble actions and remarkable sayings of illustrious persons of both sexes, those which have been most celebrated have not always been the most illustrious; and I am confirmed in this opinion, by a conversation I had yesterday with Fannia. This lady is grand-daughter to that celebrated Arria, who animated her husband to meet death, by her own glorious example. She informed me of several particulars relating to Arria, not less heroical than this famous action of hers, though less taken notice of; which I am persuaded will raise your admiration as much as they did mine. Her husband Cæcinna Pætus, and her son, were both at the same time attacked with a dangerous illness, of which the son died. This youth, who had a most beautiful person and amiable behaviour, was not less endeared to his parents by his virtues than by the ties of affection. His mother managed his funeral so privately that Pætus did not know of his death. Whenever she came into his bed-chamber, she pretended her son was better; and as often as he inquired after his health, would answer, that he had rested well, or had ate with an appetite. When she found she could no longer restrain her grief, but her tears were gushing out, she would leave the room, and having given vent to her passion, return again with dry eyes and a serene countenance, as if she had dismissed every sentiment of sorrow at her entrance. The * action was, no doubt, truly noble, when
drawing

* The story, as mentioned by several of the ancient historians, is to this purpose: Pætus having joined
K 3 Scribonianus,

drawing the dagger she plunged it in her breast, and then presented it to her husband with that ever memorable, I had almost said that divine expression, *Pætus, it is not painful*. It must however be considered, when she spoke and acted thus, she had the prospect of immortal glory before her eyes to encourage and support her. But was it not something much greater, without the view of such powerful motives, to hide her tears, to conceal her grief, and cheerfully seem the mother when she was no more?

Scribonianus had taken up arms in Illyria against Claudius, where having lost his life, Pætus, who was of his party, was brought prisoner to Rome. When they were going to put him on board a ship, Arria besought the soldiers that she might be permitted to go with him: *Certainly*, said she, *you cannot refuse a man of consular dignity, as he is, a few slaves to wait upon him; but if you will take me, I alone will perform that office*. This favour, however, she could not obtain; upon which she hired a small fishing-vessel, and boldly ventured to follow the ship. At her return to Rome, she met the wife of Scribonianus in the emperor's palace, who pressing her to discover all she knew of that insurrection, *What!* said she, *shall I regard thy advice, who saw thy husband murdered even in thy very arms, and yet survivest him?* An expression which plainly shews, that the noble manner in which she put

Scribonianus, who was in arms in Illyria against Claudius, was taken after the death of the latter, and condemned to death. Arria, having in vain solicited his life, persuaded him to destroy himself, rather than suffer the ignominy of falling by the executioner's hands; and in order to encourage him to an act, to which it seems he was not much inclined, she set him the example in the manner Pliny relates.

an end to her life, was no unpremeditated effect of sudden passion. When Thrasea, who married her daughter, was dissuading her from her purpose of destroying herself, and among other arguments which he used, said to her, *Would you then advise your daughter to die with me, if my life were to be taken from me?* Most certainly I would, she replied, *if she had lived as long and in as much harmony with you, as I have with my Pætus.* His answer greatly heightened the alarm of her family, and made them observe her for the future more narrowly; which when she perceived, she assured them, all their caution would be to no purpose. *You may oblige me,* said she, *to execute my resolution in a way that will give me more pain, but it is impossible you should prevent it.* She had scarce said this, when she sprang from her chair, and running her head with the utmost violence against the wall, she fell down, in appearance dead. But being brought to herself, *I told you,* said she, *if you would not suffer me to take the easy paths to death, I should make my way to it through some more difficult passage.* Now, is there not, my friend, something much greater in all this, than the so-much talked of, *Pætus, it is not painful?* to which, indeed, it seems to have led the way: and yet this last is the favourite topic of fame, while all the former are passed over in profound silence. Whence I cannot but infer, what I observed in the beginning of my letter, that the most famous actions are not always the most noble. Farewell.

Epist. XVII. PLINY to SERVIANUS.

IT is so long since I heard from you, that I must ask, if all things are right? If they are, is business your obstruction? Or, if you are not employed, are the opportunities of writing few or none?

none? Deliver me from this state of doubt: it is a situation I cannot bear. Relieve me though you send your letters by a particular messenger. I will pay his travelling-expenses: nay, I will give him more; let him but tell me what I wish to hear. I am well, if a man can be said to be well who lives in perpetual suspense and anxiety, expecting and fearing, every hour, all that can possibly happen to his dearest friend upon earth. Farewell.

Epist. XVIII. PLINY to SEVERUS.

IT was a duty incumbent upon me in quality of consul, to return the thanks, and to make the compliments of the republic to the Emperor; but after I had performed that ceremony in the senate in the usual manner, and as fully as the time and place would allow, I thought it agreeable to the affection of a good subject, to enlarge those general heads, and extend them into a complete discourse. My principal view in doing so, was, to confirm the emperor in his virtues, by paying that tribute of applause to them which they so justly deserve; and at the same time to direct future princes, not in the formal way of lecture, but by his more engaging example, to those paths they must pursue, if they would attain the same heights of glory. To instruct princes how to form their conduct, is a noble, but difficult task, and may, perhaps, be esteemed a presumption: but to applaud the character of an accomplished emperor, and to hold him out to posterity, as a light to guide succeeding monarchs, is a method equally useful, and much more modest. It afforded me a very singular pleasure when I recited this panegyric, that my friends gave me their company, though I did not solicit them in the usual form of circular billets, but
only

only desired their attendance, if it would be agreeable to them, and they were entirely disengaged. You know the excuses which are generally made at Rome to avoid invitations of this kind; yet, though the weather proved extremely bad at that time, they attended the recital for two days together; and when I thought it would be unreasonable to detain them any longer, they insisted upon my going through with it the next day. Shall I consider this as an honour paid to myself or to polite literature? Rather let me suppose to the latter, which, though well nigh extinct, seems to be now again reviving amongst us. Yet what was the subject which raised this uncommon attention? No other than what formerly, even in the senate, where we were obliged to submit to it, we could not endure to hear, though but for a few moments. But now, you see, we have patience to recite and attend to a topic of the same nature for three days together: and the reason of the difference is, not that we have more eloquence, but more liberty than formerly, and consequently write with more spirit. It is an additional glory therefore to our present emperor, that this sort of harangues, which were once as odious as they were false, are now as pleasing as they are sincere. But it was not only the earnest attention of my audience which afforded me pleasure; I was greatly delighted too with the justness of their taste: for I observed, that the more nervous parts of my discourse gave them much satisfaction. It is true, indeed, this work, which was written for the perusal of the world in general, was read only to a few; however, I would willingly look upon their particular judgment as an earnest of that of the public, and rejoice at their manly taste as if it were universally spread. It was in eloquence as in music, the vitiated ears of the audience introduced a depraved style; but
now,

now, I am inclined to hope, as a more refined judgment prevails in the public, our compositions of both kinds will improve too; for those authors whose only view is to please, will form their works upon the general taste of the people. I imagine, however, in subjects of this nature the florid style is most proper; and am so far from thinking that the gay colouring I have used, will be esteemed foreign and unnatural, that I am most apprehensive that censure will fall upon those parts where I have been most plain and unornamented. Nevertheless I sincerely wish the time may come (and would to heaven it now were!) when the smooth and luscious manner which has infected our style, shall give place, as it ought, to severe and chaste composition.—Thus I have given you an account how I have been employed these last three days, that your absence might not entirely deprive you of a pleasure, which, from your friendship to me, and the part you take in every thing that concerns the interest of learning, I know you would have received, if you had been present. Farewell.

Epist. XIX. PLINVS to CALVISIUS RUFUS.

I Must apply to you, according to my custom, in an affair which concerns my finances. Some lands which lie contiguous to mine, and indeed are intermixed with them, are offered to be sold. There are several circumstances which strongly incline me to this purchase, as there are others no less weighty which deter me from it. The first recommendation this estate has, is, the agreeableness of its joining to me; the next, the advantage as well as the pleasure of being able to visit it under one trouble and expense; to have it looked after by the same steward, and cultivated almost by the same husbandmen; and to have
only

only one villa to maintain, as it will be sufficient to keep up the other just in common repair. I take into this account furniture, housekeepers, gardeners, artificers, and all the apparatus that relates to the game, as it saves a very considerable expence when you are not obliged to keep them at more houses than one. On the other hand, I do not know whether it is prudent to venture so much of one's property under the same climate, and to the same casualties; it seems a more sure method of guarding against the caprices of fortune, to distribute one's possessions into different situations: besides, there is something extremely amusing in shifting the scene, and travelling from one estate to another. But to mention the point of principal difficulty: the lands are rich, fertile, and well watered, consisting chiefly of meadow-grounds, vineyards, and woods, the produce of which, though it is not very great, or very profitable, yet seldom fails: but then, to balance the advantages of soil, the present tenants have been extremely oppressed. The person who was last in possession used frequently to seize and sell their stock, by which means, though he lessened the debt for the present, yet in the event he greatly impoverished the estate, and the consequence was that they were again in arrears. I shall be obliged therefore to furnish these honest farmers with a new supply of hands for tillage, which I must be at the expence of buying, as there are none left upon the estate, neither have I any bond-slaves of my own. And now it remains only to inform you of the price, which is three millions of sesterces. It has been formerly sold for five millions, but partly by the general calamity of the times, and partly by its being thus stripped of labourers, the income of this estate is reduced, and consequently its value. You will be inclined, perhaps, to inquire whether I can easily raise
the

the purchase-money? It is true, indeed, my estate is chiefly in land, though I have some money placed out at interest; but I can without difficulty borrow any sum I have occasion for. I have always a sure resource in the purse of my wife's mother, which I can use with the same freedom as my own; so that you need not give yourself any trouble as to that article, if you should have no other objections, which I beg you would very maturely consider: for as in every thing else, so particularly in matters of œconomy, no man has more judgment and experience than yourself. Farewell.

Epist. XX. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

DO you remember to have read of the many commotions that were occasioned by the law which directs that the elections of magistrates shall be by balloting, and how much the author of it was both approved and condemned? Yet this very law the senate lately unanimously received, and upon the election-day, with one consent, called for the ballots. It must be owned, the method by open votes had introduced into the senate more riot and disorder than is seen even in the assemblies of the people; all regularity in speaking, all decency of silence, all dignity of character was broke through; and it was universal dissonance and clamour: here, the several candidates running from side to side with their patrons; there, a troop collected together in the middle of the senate-house; and, in short, the whole assembly divided into separate parties, created the most indecent confusion. Thus widely had we departed from the manners of our ancestors, who conducted these elections with a calmness and regularity suitable to the reverence which is due to the majesty of the senate. I have been
informed

informed by some who remember those times, that the method observed in their assemblies was this: the name of the person who offered himself for any office being called over, a profound silence ensued, when immediately the candidate appeared, who after he had spoke for himself, and given an account to the senate of his life and manners, called witnesses in support of his character. These were, either the person under whom he had served in the army, or to whom he had been quaestor, or both, (if the case admitted of it), to whom he also joined some of those friends who espoused his interest. They delivered what they had to say in his favour, in few words, but with great dignity: and this had far more influence than the modern method of humble solicitation. Sometimes the candidate would object either to the birth, or age, or character of his competitor; to which the senate would listen with a severe and impartial attention: and thus was merit generally preferred to interest. But corruption having abused this wise institution of our ancestors, we were obliged to have recourse to the way of balloting, as the most probable remedy for this evil. The method being new, and immediately put in practice, it answered the present purpose very well; but, I am afraid, in process of time it will introduce new inconveniencies; as this manner of balloting seems to afford a sort of screen to injustice and partiality. For how few are there who preserve the same delicacy of conduct in secret, as when exposed to the view of the world? The truth is, the generality of mankind revere Fame more than Conscience. But this, perhaps, may be pronouncing too hastily upon a future contingency: be it therefore as it may, we have in the mean while obtained by this method an election of such magistrates as best deserved the honour. For it was with us as with those sort of judges

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who are named upon the spot, we were taken before we had time to be biased, and therefore determined impartially.

I have given you this detail, not only as a piece of news; but because I am glad to seize every opportunity of speaking of the republic; a subject, which as we have fewer occasions of mentioning than our ancestors, so we ought to be more careful not to let any of them slip. In good earnest, I am tired with repeating over and over the same compliments, *How do ye do?* and, *I hope you are well.* Why should our letters for ever turn upon trivial and domestic concerns? It is true, indeed, the direction of the public weal is in the hands of a single person, who, for the general good, takes upon himself solely to ease us of the care and weight of government; but still that bountiful source of power permits, by a very generous dispensation, some streams to flow down to us: and of these we may not only taste ourselves, but thus, as it were, administer them to our absent friends. Farewell.

Epist. XXI. PLINY to PRISCUS.

I Have just received an account of the death of Valerius Martial, which gives me much affliction. He was an acute, sprightly, ingenious man, and his writings abound with an agreeable spirit of wit and satire, conducted at the same time by great candour and good nature. When he left Rome, I made him a present to defray the charges of his journey, which I gave him, not only as a testimony of my friendship, but in return for the verses with which he had complimented me. It was the custom of the ancients to distinguish those poets with honourable and pecuniary rewards, who had celebrated particular persons or cities in their verses: but this generous practice, with every

every other that is fair and noble, is now grown out of fashion; and in consequence of having ceased to act laudably, we consider applause as an impertinent and worthless tribute. You will be desirous, perhaps, to see the verse, which merited this acknowledgment from me; and I believe I can, from my memory, partly satisfy your curiosity, without referring you to his works: but if you are pleased with this specimen of them, you must turn to his poems for the rest. He addresses himself to his muse, whom he directs to go to my house upon the *Esquiliæ*; but to approach me with respect:

*Go, wanton muse, but go with care,
Nor meet, ill tim'd, my Pliny's ear.
He, by sage Minerva taught,
Gives the day to studious thought,
And plans that eloquence divine,
Which shall to future ages shine,
And rival, wondrous Tully! thine.
Then, cautious, watch the vacant hour,
When Bacchus reigns in all his pow'r;
When crown'd with rosy chaplets gay,
E'en rigid Cato read my lay *.*

Do you not think that the poet who wrote in such terms of me, deserved some friendly marks of my bounty then, and that he merits my sorrow now? For he gave me the most he could, and it was want of power only, if his present was not more valuable. But to say truth, what higher can be conferred on man than honour, and applause, and immortality?—And though it should be granted, that his poems will not be immortal, still, no doubt, he composed them upon the contrary supposition. Farewell.

* Val. Mart. l. x. 19.

B O O K IV.

Epist. I. PLINY to FABATUS.

AFTER so long an absence, you desire a visit from your grand-daughter * and myself. Nothing, be assured, could be more agreeable to us both; for we equally wish to see you, and are determined to delay that pleasure no longer. For this purpose our baggage is actually making ready, and we are hastening to you with all the expedition the roads will permit. We shall stop only once, and that for a short time; intending to turn a little out of the way in order to go into Tuscany: not for the sake of looking upon our estate, and into our family-concerns, for that we could defer to another opportunity; but to perform an indispensable duty. There is a town near my estate, called Tifernum upon the Tiber, which put itself under my patronage when I was yet a youth. These people enter extremely into my interest, celebrate my arrival among them, express the greatest concern when I leave them, and in short, give every proof of an affection towards me as strong as it is undeserved. That I may return their good offices (for what-generous mind can bear to be excelled in acts of friendship?), I have built a temple in this place, at my own expense; and as it is finished, it would be a sort of impiety to omit the dedication of it any longer. We design, therefore, to be there on the day that ceremony is to be performed, and I have resolved to celebrate it with a general feast. We may possibly continue there all the next day, but we shall make so much the more expedition upon the road. May we have the happiness to find you and your

* Calphurnia, i ny's wife.

daughter

daughter in good health ! as I am sure we shall in good spirits, if you see us safely arrived. Farewell.

Epist. II. . PLINY to CLEMENS.

Regulus has lost his son ; the only misfortune which he did not deserve, for I much doubt whether he thinks it one. The boy was of a sprightly, but ambiguous turn ; however, he seemed capable enough of steering right, if he could have avoided splitting upon his father's example. Regulus gave him his freedom, in order to entitle him to the estate left him by his mother ; and when he got into possession of it, endeavoured (as the character of the man made it generally believed) to wheedle him out of it, by the most singular and indecent complaisance. This, perhaps, you will scarce think credible ; but if you consider Regulus, you will not be long of that opinion. However, he now expresses his concern for the loss of this youth in a most outrageous manner. The boy had a great number of little coach and saddle horses ; dogs of different sorts, together with parrots, blackbirds, and nightingales in abundance : all these Regulus flew round the funeral pile of his son, in the ostentation of an affected grief. He is visited upon this occasion by a surprising number of people, who though they secretly detest and abhor him, yet are as assiduous in their attendance upon him, as if they were influenced by a principle of real esteem and affection ; or, to speak my sentiments in few words, they endeavour to recommend themselves to his favour, by following his example. He is retired to his villa cross the Tiber ; where he has covered a vast extent of ground with his porticoes, and crowded all the shore with his statues : for he blends prodigality with covetousness, and vain-glory

glory with infamy. By his continuing there, he lays his visitors under the great inconvenience of coming to him at this unwholesome season; and he seems to consider the trouble they put themselves to, as a matter of consolation. He gives out, with his usual absurdity, that he designs to marry. You must expect, therefore, to hear shortly of the wedding of a man oppressed with sorrow and years; that is, of one who marries both too soon and too late. Do you ask me why I conjecture thus? Certainly, not because he affirms it himself (for never was there so infamous a liar), but because there is no doubt that Regulus will do every thing he ought not. Farewell.

Epist. III. PLINY to ANTONINUS.

THat you have been twice consul, and acted with the dignity of the ancients in that office; that few (your modesty will not suffer me to say none) ever have, or ever will come up to the integrity and wisdom of your Asiatic administration; that in virtue, in authority, and even in years you are the first of Romans; these, most certainly, are shining and noble parts of your character: nevertheless, I own, it is in your retired hours that I most admire you. To season the severity of business with the sprightliness of wit, and to temper wisdom with politeness, is as difficult as it is great: yet these uncommon qualities you have most happily united in those wonderful charms, which not only grace your conversation, but particularly distinguish your writings. Your lips, like the venerable old man's in Homer, drop honey, and one would imagine the bee had diffused her sweetness over all you compose. These were the sentiments I had when I lately read your Greek epigrams and satires. What elegance, what beauties shine in this collection!

how

how sweetly the numbers flow, and how exactly are they wrought up in the true spirit of the ancients! what a vein of wit runs through every line, and how conformable is the whole to the rules of just criticism! I fancied I had got in my hands Callimachus or Herodes, or, if possible, some poet even superior to these: though indeed, neither of those authors excelled, as you have, in both those species of poetry. Is it possible, that a Roman can write Greek in so much perfection? I protest I do not believe Athens herself can be more Attic. To own the truth, I cannot but envy Greece the honour of your preference. And since you can write thus elegantly in a foreign language, it is past conjecture what you could have performed in your own. Farewell.

Epist. IV. PLINY to SOSSIUS.

I Have a most affectionate esteem for Calvisius Nepos; as indeed he is a man of indefatigable industry, great eloquence, and (what I prefer to all the rest) of consummate integrity: he is nephew to your friend and my guest Calvisius. I beg therefore you would do him and his uncle the honour of making him one of the tribunes of the soldiers. It will be an obligation to us at the same time, as well as to Nepos, whom, I am persuaded, you will think equally deserving your favour. You have bestowed numberless good offices upon many; but I will venture to say, you never conferred one that was better placed than here; and few, perhaps, so well. Farewell.

Epist. V. PLINY to SPARSUS.

IT is reported, that when Æschines, at the request of the Rhodians, read to them one of his
his

his orations, together with that which Demosthenes had composed upon the same occasion, they were both received with the loudest applause. I am not surpris'd that the harangues of such excellent orators should be thus warmly admired, when I consider, that even an oration of mine, which I lately recited before a very learned audience, was heard with equal earnestness and approbation, for two days successively: yet there was not the pleasure which arises from a contention between two rival pieces, to awaken their attention. The Rhodians, besides the particular merit of the orations, had the entertainment of comparing them together, to excite their curiosity; but mine had the good fortune to please, though destitute of that enlivening recommendation; whether deservedly or not, you will judge, when you read the performance; the extent of which will not permit me to introduce it to you with a longer preface. I must therefore shorten my letter, in order to reconcile you the better to the length of the speech that attends it; which, however, I have not enlarged beyond the bounds my subject requires. Farewell.

Epist. VI. PLINY to NASO.

They tell me, that a storm of hail has destroyed all the produce of my estate in Tuscany; while that which I have on the other side the Po, though it has proved extremely fruitful this season, yet, from the excessive cheapness of every thing, turns to small account. Laurentinum is the single possession which yields me any advantage. I have nothing there, indeed, but a house and gardens; all the rest is barren sands; still, however, my best productions rise at Laurentinum. It is there I cultivate, if
not

not my lands, at least my mind, and form many a composition. As in other places I can shew you full barns; so there I can entertain you with good store of the literary kind. Let me advise you then, if you wish for a never-failing revenue, to purchase something upon this contemplative coast. Farewell.

Epist. VII. PLINY to LEPIDUS.

I Often tell you that Regulus is a man of spirit. It is amazing how effectually he accomplishes whatever he engages in. He chose lately to be extremely concerned for the loss of his son: accordingly he mourned for him in a way which no man ever mourned before. He took it into his head that he would have several statues and representations of him: immediately all the artificers in Rome are set to work. Colours, wax, brass, silver, ivory, marble, all exhibit the figure of young Regulus. Not long ago he read, before a numerous audience, a panegyric upon the life of his son: a large book upon the life of a boy! then a thousand transcribers were employed to copy this curious anecdote, which he dispersed all over the empire. He wrote likewise a sort of circular letter to the several decurii, to desire they would chuse out one of their order who had a strong clear voice, to read this eulogy to the people; and I am informed it has been done accordingly. Had this spirit (or whatever else you will call an earnestness in executing all one undertakes) been rightly applied, what infinite good might it have produced! The misfortune is, this active cast is generally strongest in men of vicious characters: for as ignorance begets rashness, and knowledge inspires caution; so modesty is apt to depress and weaken the great and well-formed genius, whilst boldness supports and
strengthens

strengthens low and little minds. Regulus is a strong proof of the truth of this observation : he has a weak voice, an awkward address, a thick speech, a slow imagination, and no memory ; in a word, he has nothing but an extravagant genius : and yet, by the assistance of this flighty turn and much impudence, he passes with many for a finished orator. Herennius Senecio revered Cato's definition of an orator, and applied it with great justice to Regulus : *An orator, said he, is a bad man unskilled in the art of speaking.* And, in good earnest, Cato's definition is not a more exact description of a true orator, than Senecio's is of the character of this man. Would you make a suitable return to this letter ? let me know if you, or any of my friends in your town, have with an air of pleasantry mouthed (as Demosthenes calls it) this melancholy piece to the people, like a stroller in the market-place. For so absurd a performance must move rather laughter than compassion : and indeed the composition is as puerile as the subject. Farewell.

Epist. VIII. PLINY to ARRIANUS.

YOU congratulate me upon my advancement to the dignity of augur ; and you do it on good ground ; not only as it is highly glorious to receive, even in the slightest instances, a testimony of the approbation of so wise and judicious a prince ; but as it is also an ancient and sacred institution, which has this high and peculiar privilege annexed to it, that it is for life. Other sacerdotal honours, though they may perhaps equal this in dignity, yet as they are given, so they may be taken away : but fortune has no farther power over this, than to bestow it. What recommends this dignity to me still more, is, that I have the honour to succeed so illustrious a person

person as Julius Frontinus. He for many years, upon the nomination-day of proper persons to be received into the sacred college, constantly proposed me, as if he had a view to my being his successor; and since it has actually proved so in the event, I am willing to look upon it as something more than accident. But the circumstance, it seems, that most pleases you in this affair, is, that Tully enjoyed the same post; and you rejoice (you tell me) to find that I follow his steps as closely in the paths of honour, as I endeavour to do in those of eloquence. I wish, indeed, as I had the advantage to be admitted earlier into the sacred college, and consular office than Cicero, so I might, in my more advanced years, catch some spark, at least, of his divine genius! The former, as it is in the gift of man, may happen to me and to many; but the latter is an attainment much too high for my hopes, and in the disposal of heaven alone. Farewell.

Epist. IX. PLINY to URSUS.

FOR several days past the senate has been engaged in the cause of Julius Bassus, a man grown familiar with misfortunes, and rendered conspicuous by a series of calamities. In the reign of Vespasian, two private persons informed against him, and the affair being referred to the senate, it depended there a considerable time, when at last he was honourably acquitted. During the time of Titus, he was under continual apprehensions of his resentment, as being known to favour the interests of Domitian: yet when the emperor ascended the throne, Bassus was exiled; but afterwards recalled by Nerva. Having obtained the proconsulship of Bithynia, he was at his return from thence accused of bribery and extortion;

extortion; and as he was prosecuted with warmth, he was defended with vigour. The sentiments of the senate were greatly divided, however the majority were on the most favourable side. Pomponius Rufus, a person of great spirit and vivacity, was counsel against him. He was seconded by Theophanes, one of the deputies from the province, and indeed the chief promoter and inflamer of this prosecution. I began the reply; for Bassus insisted that the foundation of his defence should be laid by me. He desired me to represent the consideration that was due to his illustrious birth, and to the dangers he had undergone; that his accusers were informers by profession, who reaped considerable advantage by their trade; and to display the true reasons which rendered him odious to the seditious, and particularly to Theophanes; but above all, to confute the principal charge that was brought against him: for in all the rest, however grievous the accusation might appear, he not only deserved to be acquitted, but highly commended. The great difficulty of the case was, that, in the simplicity of his heart, he had incautiously received the gifts which some of his friends in the province (for he had been among them before as quæstor) thought proper to send him. This, which his accusers called rapine and extortion, Bassus justified under the notion of presents. But then the laws expressly forbid persons in his station, to receive any presents whatsoever. Now, what method of defence should I strike into upon this occasion? If I denied the fact, I was afraid it would look like a tacit confession that it was actually extortion: besides, to disown what was so notorious, would be to heighten rather than to extenuate the charge. And, indeed, he had put that out of the power of his counsel, if they had thought it proper; for he

he had acknowledged to several persons, and particularly to the emperor, that he had received and returned a few slight presents upon his birthday, and at the feast of the Saturnalia. Should I apply to the clemency of the senate? That would be ruining my client at once, by confessing the nature of his offence was such, that there was no other way of saving him. Should I then justify the fact? but in so doing I should have injured my own character, without rendering any service to Bassus. Under these difficulties I thought it would be best to steer a middle course; and I flatter myself I happily hit upon it. But night coming on separated, as usual, the combatants. I had spoke for three hours and a half, so that I had still an hour and a half remaining. For the law having allowed six hours to the plaintiff, and nine to the defendant, Bassus had so divided this portion of time between me and the advocate who was to speak after me, that I had five hours, and he the rest. But perceiving my speech had made a favourable impression upon the senate, I thought it would be most advisable to add nothing more; for it is not prudent, you know, to push one's success too far. Besides, I was apprehensive I should not have strength to renew the defence the next day, as it is much easier to go on without intermission, than to begin again after having rested. There was yet another consideration which had great weight with me: I was afraid that as the discontinuance of my speech would abate my own ardour; so the resumption of it might prove tiresome to my hearers. When an harangue is carried on in one continued course, the speaker best keeps up his own fire, and the attention of the audience, both which are apt to cool and grow languid upon a remission: just as a continued motion preserves the light of a torch, which, when once it is

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extinct, is not easily rekindled. But Bassus, almost with tears in his eyes, earnestly pressed me to go on with his defence for the remainder of the time; which I accordingly complied with, preferring his interest to my own. And the event proved extremely favourable; for I found the attention of the senate as fresh and lively as if it had been rather animated, than fatigued by the former part of my speech. I was seconded by Luccius Albinus, who entered so thoroughly into my reasoning, that our speeches, whilst they had the variety of different and distinct orations, had the connection and uniformity of one entire harangue. Herennius Pollio replied to us with great spirit and solidity: and after him Theophanes spoke again; in this, as in every thing else, discovering his uncommon assurance, by presuming to take up the time of the senate, after two such eloquent persons, and of consular dignity, had spoke before him. He continued haranguing till evening, and even beyond it; for they called for lights. The next day Titius Pomulus, and Fronto spoke gloriously in behalf of Bassus. The fourth day was employed in examining the proofs. Bæbius Macer, the consul elect, declared Bassus guilty, within the express words of the law relating to bribery and extortion. Cæpio Hispano was of opinion, that, without affecting his dignity, the case should be referred to the ordinary judges: and both their sentiments were founded in reason. You will wonder how that can be, since they were so extremely different. But you will observe, that Macer, who considered the mere letter of the law, might very reasonably condemn him, when it appeared he had taken presents contrary to the express prohibition of that law. On the other hand, Cæpio supposing that the senate had a power, (as undoubtedly it has), to moderate or extend

extend the rigour of the laws, might upon very good grounds think this a case worthy of their clemency, as being (though indeed contrary to the express letter of the law, yet) not unfrequently practised. The motion of Cæpio prevailed; and when he rose up to give the reasons for his vote, the same acclamations attended him, as usually follow an approved speech. You will easily judge therefore, how great the applause was after he had spoke, when he received such unusual ones before he began. I find the sentiments of the people without doors, as well as in the house, are divided into two parties: the one who approve of Cæpio's vote, condemn Macer's as severe and hard: on the contrary, the partisans of Macer's opinion treat the other as too mild, and indeed inconsistent. They assert, it is highly absurd to send a man to be tried before the ordinary judges, and yet suffer him to retain his seat in the senate. I should have told you that there was besides those I have mentioned, a third opinion. Valerius Paulinus, who joined in sentiments with Cæpio, was for adding farther, that the senate should proceed against Theophanes, after he had finished his commission as deputy from the province. For he insisted, that Theophanes, in the course of his accusation, had been guilty of several things which fell within the prohibition of this very law, upon which he grounded his information against Bassus. But though this proposal was in general highly approved by the senate, yet the consuls thought proper to drop it: Paulinus, however, had the full credit of so honest and bold a motion. At the breaking up of the house, Bassus was received by great crowds of people with the highest demonstrations of joy, and the loudest acclamations. This new difficulty which he had fallen into, had recalled the remembrance of

his former troubles; and a name which had never been mentioned but in conjunction with some misfortune, together with the appearance of a fine person broken with sorrow and age, had raised a general compassion towards him. You may look upon this letter as the forerunner of my speech, which, full and copious as it is, I shall send you at large; but you must not expect it soon; for it is a subject of too much importance to be revised in haste. Farewell.

Epist. X. PLINY to SABINUS.

YOU write me, that Sabina, who made you and me her heirs, though she has no where expressly directed that Modestus shall have his freedom, yet has left him a legacy in the following words; *I give, &c.—to Modestus, whom I have ordered to be made free*: upon which you desire my sentiments. I have consulted upon this occasion with the most learned lawyers, and they all agree Modestus is not entitled to his liberty, since it is not expressly given, and consequently that the legacy is void, as being devised to a slave. But it appears plainly to be a mistake in the testatrix; and therefore I think we ought to act in this case as if Sabina had directed in so many words, what it is clear she imagined she had. I am persuaded you will join with me in these sentiments, who so religiously regard the will of the dead; which indeed, where it can be discovered, will always be law to an honest mind. Honour is to you and me as strong an obligation, as necessity to others. Let Modestus then enjoy his freedom and his legacy in as full a manner, as if Sabina had observed all the requisite forms; as indeed they effectually do, who chuse their heirs with discretion. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XI. PLINY TO MINUTIANUS.

HAVE you heard that Licinianus professes rhetoric in Sicily? I scarce believe you heard it, for the news is but just arrived. This unfortunate person, who lately enjoyed the dignity of prætor, and was esteemed the most eloquent of our advocates, is now fallen from a senator to an exile, from an orator to a teacher of rhetoric. Licinianus himself took notice of this sad change, in a strong pathetic speech which he made at the opening of his school. *Oh fortune, said he, how capriciously dost thou sport with mankind! Thou makest rhetoricians of senators, and senators of rhetoricians!* a sarcasm so full of gall, that one might almost imagine he fixed upon this profession merely for the sake of an opportunity of applying it. Being dressed, when he first appeared in the chair, after the Grecian fashion, (for exiles are not permitted to wear the Roman gown), *Alas,* says he, looking upon his habit, *I am going to declaim in Latin!* You will say, perhaps this situation, wretched and deplorable as it is, is what he well deserves for having thrown so vile a stain upon his profession by his abominable lewdness. It is true, indeed, he confessed the crime with which he was charged; but whether it was from a consciousness of his guilt, or from an apprehension of worse consequences if he denied it, is not clear; for Domitian's vengeance generally raged with the greatest fury, where his evidence failed him most. That emperor had determined that Cornelia Maximilla, one of the Vestal virgins, should be buried alive, from an extravagant notion that those kind of exemplary severities did honour to his reign. Accordingly in the character of high priest, or rather indeed in that of a lawless and cruel tyrant, he convened the sacred college,

college, not in the pontifical court, where they usually assemble, but at his villa near Alba; and there (by a sentence no less wicked, as it was passed when she was not present to defend herself, than as it was the effect of passion and revenge) he condemned her of having violated her Vestal vow. Yet he himself had been guilty, not only of debauching his brother's daughter, but was also accessory to her death: for that lady being a widow, in order to conceal her shame, endeavoured to procure an abortion, and by that means lost her life. However, the priests were directed to see the sentence immediately performed upon Cornelia. As they were leading her to the place of execution, she called upon Vesta, and the rest of the gods, to attest her virtue; and amongst other exclamations, frequently cried out, *Is it possible that Cæsar can think me polluted, under the influence of whose sacred functions he has conquered and triumphed?* Whether she said this in flattery or derision; whether it proceeded from a consciousness of her innocence, or contempt of the emperor, is not certain; but she continued exclaiming in this manner, till she came to the place of execution, to which she was led at least like a criminal, though perhaps not really one. As she was going down into the subterraneous cavern, her gown hung upon something in the way; upon which turning back to disengage it, the executioner offered her his hand, which she refused with some horror, as if she could not touch it without impurity. Thus she preserved the appearance of a consummate chastity to the concluding scene of her life,

And her last care was decently to fall.

Celer likewise, a Roman knight, who was accused of being her gallant, during the whole time
his

his sentence was executing upon him, in the square near the senate-house, persisted in saying, *What crime have I been guilty of? I have been guilty of none.* These professions of innocence had fixed upon the character of Domitian the imputation of cruelty and injustice, and therefore extremely exasperated him. Licinianus then, being seized by the emperor's orders for having carried off a freed-woman of Cornelia's to one of his seats, was advised, by the persons who had the custody of him, to confess the fact, if he hoped to obtain favour, and avoid the last punishment; which he accordingly did. Herennius Senecio spok. for him in his absence, something in that abrupt manner in which Antilochus in Homer relates the death of Patroclus: *Dead is Patroclus! Instead of an advocate, said he, I must turn informer: Licinianus is fled!* This news was so agreeable to Domitian, that he could not forbear betraying his satisfaction: *Then, says he, has Licinianus acquitted us of injustice in this charge; but we will not urge his confusion too far.* He accordingly permitted him to carry off such of his effects as he could secure before they were seized for the use of the public, and made his banishment easy, as a sort of reward for the complaisance of this voluntary confession. Licinianus was afterwards, by the clemency of the emperor Nerva, permitted to fix in Sicily, where he now professes rhetoric, and inveighs against the caprices of fortune.—You see how obedient I am to your commands, by sending you a circumstantial detail of foreign as well as domestic news. I imagined, indeed, as you were absent when this transaction happened, that you had heard only in general that Licinianus was banished upon account of his lewdness. For fame usually makes her report in general terms, without relating particular circumstances. I think I deserve in return a full
account

account of all that happens in your town and its neighbourhood; for sometimes, no doubt, occurrences arise there worth relating; however, write any thing, provided you send me a letter as long as mine. But I give you notice, I will abate nothing in this demand, and I shall not only number the sides, but even the very lines and syllables. Farewell.

Epist. XII. PLINY TO ARRIANUS.

YOU love Egnatius Marcellinus, and often mention him to me with approbation; but he will rise still higher in your affection, when I inform you of the honourable part he has lately acted. When he went quæstor into one of the provinces, the person to whose lot it fell to attend him as secretary, happening to die before his salary became due, Marcellinus had too much honour to think he had a right of applying the sum which the public had appointed for that purpose, to his own use. At his return therefore he applied to Cæsar, who referred the consideration of what should be done with this money, to the senate. It was a question indeed of no great importance; however, a question it was. The heirs of the secretary claimed it for themselves, and the commissioners of the treasury for the public. The cause was tried, and counsel were heard, who spoke extremely well on both sides. Cæcilius Strabo was of opinion that the public had a right to this sum. Bæbius Macer gave it for the heirs: but it was determined agreeably to the sentiments of the former. You will, I am persuaded, take the first opportunity, as I did myself, of expressing your approbation to Marcellinus of this action; for though indeed it is abundantly sufficient that he has received the applause of the emperor and the senate, yet the
addition

addition of yours will be a very considerable satisfaction to him. Those who are actuated by a sense of fame, are fond of praise, even though it comes from their inferiors ; but Marcellinus has so high an esteem of you, as to be particularly desirous to approve himself to your judgment. To which let me add, it will heighten his pleasure when he finds, that the fame of this action has travelled so far as to have reached you. For I know not how it is, mankind are generally more pleased with an extensive than even a great reputation. Farewell.

Epist. XIII. PLINY to CORNELIUS TACITUS.

I Am very glad that you are safely arrived in town ; for though I am always desirous to see you, I am more particularly so now. I purpose to continue a few days longer at my house at Tusculum, in order to finish a work which I have upon my hands. For I am afraid, should I put a stop to this design now that it is so nearly completed, I shall find it difficult to resume it. In the mean while, that I may lose no time, I send this letter before me to request a favour of you, which I hope shortly to ask in person. But before I inform you what my request is, I must let you into the occasion of it. Being lately at Comum, the place of my nativity, a young lad, son to one of my neighbours, made me a visit. I asked him whether he studied oratory, and where ? he told me he did, and at Mediolanum. And why not here ? Because (said his father, who came with him) we have no professors. “ No !” said I, “ surely it concerns you who are fathers (and very opportunely several of the company were so) that your sons should receive their education here, rather than any where else. For where can they be placed more agreeably than in
“ their

“ their own country, or instructed with more
“ safety and less expense than at home and under
“ the eye of their parents? Upon what very easy
“ terms might you, by a general contribution,
“ procure proper masters, if you would only ap-
“ ply towards the raising a salary for them, the
“ extraordinary expense it costs you for your sons
“ journeys, lodgings, and whatever else you pay
“ for up on account of their being abroad; as pay
“ indeed you must in such a case for every thing.
“ Though I have no children myself, yet I shall
“ willingly contribute to a design so beneficial
“ to (what I look upon as a child, or a parent)
“ my country; and therefore I will advance a
“ third part of any sum you shall think proper to
“ raise for this purpose. I would take upon my-
“ self the whole expense, were I not apprehen-
“ sive that my benefaction might hereafter be
“ abused and perverted to private ends; as I have
“ observed to be the case in several places where
“ public foundations of this nature have been e-
“ stablished. The single means to prevent this
“ mischief is, to leave the choice of the professors
“ entirely in the breast of the parents, who will
“ be so much the more careful to determine pro-
“ perly, as they shall be obliged to share the ex-
“ pense of maintaining them. For though they
“ may be careless in disposing of another’s bounty,
“ they will certainly be cautious how they ap-
“ ply their own; and will see that none but those
“ who deserve it shall receive my money, when
“ they must at the same time receive theirs too.
“ Let my example then encourage you to unite
“ heartily in this useful design; and be assured
“ the greater the sum my share shall amount to,
“ the more agreeable it will be to me. You can
“ undertake nothing that will be more advanta-
“ geous to your children, nor more acceptable to
“ your country. They will by this means re-
“ ceive

“ receive their education where they receive their
 “ birth, and be accustomed from their infancy to
 “ inhabit and affect their native soil. May you
 “ be able to procure professors of such distin-
 “ guished abilities, that the neighbouring towns
 “ shall be glad to draw their learning from hence;
 “ and as you now send your children to foreigners
 “ for education, may foreigners in their turn flock
 “ hither for their instruction.”

I thought proper thus to lay open to you the
 rise of this affair, that you might be the more
 sensible how agreeable it will be to me, if you un-
 dertake the office I request. I intreat you there-
 fore, with all the earnestness a matter of so much
 importance deserves, to look out, amongst the
 great numbers of men of letters which the repu-
 tation of your genius brings to you, proper per-
 sons to whom we may apply for this purpose;
 but without entering into any agreement with
 them on my part. For I would leave it entirely
 free to the parents to judge and chuse as they shall
 see proper: all the share I pretend to claim is,
 that of contributing my care and my money. If
 therefore any one shall be found who thinks him-
 self qualified for the undertaking, he may repair
 thither; but without relying upon any thing but
 his merit. Farewell.

Epist. XIV. PLINY to PATERNUS.

YOU desire and expect, perhaps, according
 to custom, some grave oration; but I am
 going to put into your hands, as a most delicate
 curiosity, some of my poetical amusements. You
 will receive then with this letter a collection of
 my verses, which I wrote to while away an idle
 hour upon the road, in the bath, or at table.
 They were composed upon different occasions, as
 I found myself in a gay, an amorous, a melan-
 choly,

choly, or satirical humour; and accordingly the style is sometimes elevated, and sometimes simple. I endeavoured by this variety to hit different tastes; as some things may be found in them, perhaps, of general relish. If you should meet with any passages which may seem too free, your reading will supply you with my apology, in the example of those great and venerable names who have gone before me in the same kind of writing, who without scruple have employed not only the warmest descriptions, but the plainest terms. This, however, is a liberty I have not allowed myself; not as pretending to more severity (for why should I?) but because, in truth, I have less courage. Nevertheless, I entirely approve of the rule which Catullus lays down for this kind of compositions:

*Let the poet's conduct be
Free from wanton levity:
Not so his muse—her sportive lay
Pleases most, when most she's gay.*

You must look upon it as an instance of the great value I set upon your judgment, that I venture to submit the whole to your examination, rather than select out of them some of the more finished pieces for your approbation. Indeed in this kind of miscellaneous collections, what would pass off well enough if they were viewed separately, lose all their advantage, by appearing in better company. But a sensible and discerning reader ought not to compare pieces of distinct sorts with one another, but examine each performance apart, and if it is perfect in its kind, not condemn it because it falls short of the beauties of some others of a different nature. But I will say nothing more of them; for to attempt to excuse or recommend this idle business by a long preface.

face, would be adding one folly to another. I will only therefore premise farther, that I design to give these trifles the title of Hendecasyllables, in allusion to the measure in which the verses are composed. Call them, if you think proper, epigrams, eclogues, or (as many others have) little poems; in a word, give them what name you please, I offer them only as Hendecasyllables. All I beg of your sincerity is, that you would speak your opinion of them to me, with the same freedom that you would to others. When I ask this, I think I lay you under no difficulty. If, indeed, these little poetical essays were my only or chief productions, it might sound, perhaps, a little harsh to advise me to mind something else; but you may with great delicacy and politeness tell me, I have something else to mind. Farewell.

Epist. XV. PLINY to FUNDANUS.

IF I am governed by judgment in any thing, it is undoubtedly in the singular affection which I have for Asinius Rufus. He is a most extraordinary man, and a friend to all good men, in which number why may I not venture to include myself? He and Tacitus (to whose eminent virtues you are no stranger) are united in the strictest intimacy. If therefore you esteem us, you cannot but have the same favourable sentiments of Rufus; for a similitude of manners is, you know, the strongest cement of friendship. He has several children: and in this, as in every thing else, he acts the part of a friend to his country, by supplying it with a numerous race of citizens, which he sees with pleasure extend to a second generation; and this in an age when even one child is thought a burthen, as it prevents that lucrative adulation which is usually paid to those

who have none. But he scorns such low views, and thinks himself happy in the title of grandfather; for which he is indebted to Satorius Firmus; a person whom you would esteem as much as I do, if you knew him as well. My design in all this detail, is, to let you see, what a numerous family you may oblige by conferring a single favour: a favour which I apply to you for, because I sincerely wish and assuredly presage you will soon be in a condition to grant it. I hope, and believe you will be consul the approaching year: and in this persuasion I am confirmed both by your own conspicuous merit, and the distinguishing judgment of the emperor. Asinius Bassus, the eldest son of Rufus, solicits the quaestorship at the same time. I know not whether I ought to say (which however the father would have me both say and think, though Bassus is too modest to allow of it) that he is a greater man than his father. Were I to represent his abilities, his probity, his learning, his genius, his application, and his parts, as great as you will most certainly experience them; you, who never yet suspected my veracity, would scarce conceive he deserved the character. I wish our age so abounded in merit, as to supply you with some who might justly stand in competition with him. In that case I should be the first to advise you, to consider well where to fix your choice: but the misfortune is — however I will not speak of my friend in an invidious strain. I will only say he is a young man, who deserves you should look upon him in the same relation as our ancestors used to consider their quaestors, that is, as your son. Men of your character for wisdom should chuse their political children of the same cast they would wish nature to form their real ones. Will it not be an honour to your consulship to have a quaestor whose father has been praetor, and whose relations consuls, yet
 who,

who, though but a youth, reflects back to his family (and that by their own confession) as much glory as he derives from it? Let me entreat you then to comply with my request and my advice. In which, if I seem premature, I hope you will pardon me, when you consider, that in a place where every thing is seized by the man who can first lay hold of it, it is staying much too late to wait till precisely the proper time: besides that there is a pleasure in anticipating one's wishes. Allow *basilius* then to revere you already as consul, and do you in return esteem him as your quæstor; and may I, who love you both, enjoy that double pleasure. The truth is, as you have each so equal a claim to my affection, that I shall be obliged to promote with all my assiduity and credit both your interests in this affair, though they should happen to be distinct; so it will be extremely agreeable if I may be able to serve these two ends at one and the same time in my good offices to this young man; and in a word, to be supported in this solicitation by your assistance, to whose judgment and suffrage the senate pays so great a regard. Farewell.

Epist. XVI. PLINY to VALERIUS PAULINUS.

REjoice upon my account, rejoice upon your own account, and rejoice on the account of the public; for eloquence is still held in honour. Being lately engaged to plead in a cause before the centumviri, the croud was so great that I could not get to my place, but in passing by the tribunal where the judges sat. And I have this pleasing circumstance to add farther, that a young nobleman having lost his robe in the press, stood in his vest to hear me for seven hours together: for so long I was speaking; and with a success equal to my great fatigue. Come on then, my

friend, and let us earnestly pursue our studies, nor screen our own indolence under pretence of that of the public. Never, we may rest assured, will there be wanting hearers and readers, so long as we can supply them with orators and authors worthy of their attention. Farewell.

Epist. XVII. PLINY to GALLUS.

YOU inform me that Cæcilius, the consul elect, has commenced a suit against Corellia, and earnestly beg me to undertake her cause in her absence. As I have reason to thank you for your information, so I have to complain of your entreaties: without the first, indeed I should have been ignorant of this affair, but the last was unnecessary, as I want no solicitations to comply, where it would be ungenerous in me to refuse; for can I hesitate a moment to take upon myself the protection of a daughter of Corellius? It is true, indeed, though there is no particular intimacy between her adversary and me, we are, however, upon good terms. It is true likewise, that he is a person of great rank, and who has a claim to particular regard from me, as he is entering upon an office, which I have had the honour to fill; and it is natural for a man to be desirous those dignities should be treated with the highest respect, which he himself once possessed. Yet these considerations have little weight, when I reflect that it is the daughter of Corellius whom I am to defend. The memory of that excellent person, than whom this age has not produced a man of greater dignity, rectitude, and good sense, is indelibly impressed upon my mind. I admired him before I was acquainted with him; and contrary to what is usually the case, my esteem increased in proportion as I knew him better: and indeed I knew him thoroughly, for he treated me without

without reserve, and admitted me to share in his joys and his sorrows, in his gay and his serious hours. When I was but a youth, he esteemed, and (I will even venture to say) revered me as if I had been his equal. When I solicited any post of honour, he supported me with his interest, and recommended me by his testimony; when I entered upon it, he was my introducer and my attendant; when I exercised it, he was my guide and my counsellor. In a word, where-ever my interest was concerned, he exerted himself with as much alacrity as if he had been in all his health and vigour. In private, in public, and at court, how often has he advanced and supported my reputation! It happened once, that the conversation before the emperor Nerva turned upon the hopeful young men of that time, and several of the company were pleased to mention me with applause: he sat for a little while silent, which gave what he said the greater weight; and then with that air of dignity, to which you are no stranger, *I must be reserved*, said he, *in my praises of Pliny, because he does nothing without my advice.* By which single sentence he gave me a greater character than I would presume even to wish for, as he represented my conduct to be always such as wisdom must approve, since it was wholly under the direction of one of the wisest of men. Even in his last moments he said to his daughter, (as she often mentions), *I have in the course of a long life raised up many friends to you; but there is none that you may more assuredly depend upon, than Pliny and Cornutus.* A circumstance I cannot reflect upon, without being deeply sensible how much it is incumbent upon me, to endeavour to act up to the opinion so excellent a judge of mankind conceived of me. I shall therefore most readily give my assistance to Corellia in this affair; and willingly hazard any displeasure I may

incur by appearing in her cause. Though I should imagine, if in the course of my pleadings I should find an opportunity to explain and enforce, more at large than I can do in a letter, the reasons I have here mentioned, upon which I rest at once my apology and my glory; her adversary (whose suit may perhaps, as you say, be entirely unprecedented, as it is against a woman) will not only excuse, but approve my conduct. Farewell.

Epist. XVIII. PLINY to ANTONINUS.

WHat stronger proof can I give you how much I admire your Greek epigrams, than by having endeavoured to imitate some of them in a Latin translation? I confess however, partly from the weakness, or, as Lucretius calls it, the poverty of our native language, much to their disadvantage; yet if clothed in a Roman dress, and by my unskilful hand, you should still be able to discover some remaining beauty in them; what must their charms be, do you imagine, when adorned with all the majesty of the Greek language, and formed by your superior genius? Farewell.

Epist. XIX. PLINY to HISPULLA.

AS you are a striking example of all virtue, and as you loved your excellent and most affectionate brother with a mutual tenderness, and have not only shewn the kindness of an aunt, but supplied the loss of a tender parent to his daughter*; you will hear, I am well persuaded, with infinite pleasure, that she behaves worthy of her father, her grandfather, and yourself. She possesses an excellent understanding, together

* Calphurnia, Pliny's wife.

with a consummate prudence, and gives the strongest testimony of the purity of her heart by her fondness of me. Her affection to me has given her a turn to books ; and my compositions, which she takes a pleasure in reading, and even getting by heart, are continually in her hands. How full of tender solicitude is she when I am entering upon any cause ? How kindly does she rejoice with me when it is over ? While I am pleading, she places persons to inform her from time to time how I am heard, what applauses I receive, and what success attends the cause. When at any time I recite my works, she conceals herself behind some curtain, and with secret rapture enjoys my praises. She sings my verses to her lyre, with no other master but love, the best instructor, for her guide. From these happy circumstances I draw my most assured hopes, that the harmony between us will increase with our days, and be as lasting as our lives. For it is not my youth or my person, which time gradually impairs ; it is my reputation and my glory of which she is enamoured. But what less could be expected from one who was trained by your hands, and formed by your instructions ; who was early familiarised under your roof with all that is worthy and amiable, and was first taught to conceive an affection for me, by the advantageous colours in which you were pleased to represent me. And as you revered my mother with all the respect due even to a parent, so you kindly directed and encouraged my infancy, presaging of me from that early period all that my wife now fondly imagines I really am. Accept therefore of our mutual thanks, that you have thus, as it were designedly, formed us for each other. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XX. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

I Have already communicated to you my opinion of each particular part of your work, as I perused it; I must now tell you my general thoughts of the whole. It is a strong and beautiful performance; the sentiments are sublime and masculine, and conceived in all the variety of a pregnant imagination; the diction is chaste and elegant; the figures are happily chosen, and a copious and diffusive vein of eloquence runs through the whole, and raises a very high idea of the author. You seem borne away by the full tide of a strong imagination and deep sorrow, which mutually assist and heighten each other; for your genius gives sublimity and majesty to your passion; and your passion adds strength and poignancy to your genius. Farewell.

Epist. XXI. PLINY to VELIUS CEREALIS.

A H the sad and cruel catastrophe of the Helvidiæ! These two sisters are both dead in child-bed, after having each of them been delivered of a girl. This misfortune pierces me with the deepest sorrow; as indeed, to see two such amiable young ladies fall a sacrifice to their fruitfulness in the prime and flower of their years, is a misfortune which I cannot too greatly lament. I lament for the unhappy condition of the poor infants, who are thus become orphans from their birth: I lament for the sake of the disconsolate husbands of these ladies; and I lament too for my own. The affection I bear to the memory of their late father, is inviolable, as my * defence of him in the senate, and all my writings will witness for me. Of three children which survi-

* See b. 9. let. 13.

ved him there now remains but one; and his family that had lately so many noble supports, rests only upon a single person! It will, however, be a great mitigation of my affliction, if fortune shall kindly spare that one, and render him worthy of his father, and * grandfather: and I am so much the more anxious for his welfare and good conduct, as he is the only branch of the family remaining. You know the softness and solicitude of my heart where I have any tender attachments: you must not wonder then, that I have many fears, where I have great hopes. Farewell.

Epist. XXII. PLINY to RUFUS.

I Lately assisted our excellent emperor as one of his assessors, in a cause wherein he himself presided. A certain person left by his will, a fund for the establishment of the gymnastic games at Vienna. These my worthy friend Trebonius Rufinus, when he exercised the office of duumvir, had ordered to be totally abolished; and it was now alleged against him, that he had no authority for so doing. He spoke in his own cause with a success equal to his great eloquence; and what particularly recommended his speech

* The famous Helvidius Priscus, who signalized himself in the senate by the freedom of his speeches in favour of liberty, during the reigns of Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian; in whose time he was put to death by the order of the senate, though contrary to the inclination of the emperor, who countermanded the execution: but it was too late, the executioner having performed his office before the messenger arrived. Tacitus represents him as acting in all the various duties of social life with one consistent tenor of uniform virtue; superior to all temptations of wealth, of inflexible integrity, and unbroken courage. Hist. l. 4. 5.

was,

was, that he delivered it with a certain seasonable boldness becoming a true Roman and a good citizen, who stood up in his own defence. When the sentiments of the assessors were taken, Junius Mauricus (who in resolution and integrity has no superior) declared it was his opinion, that the liberty of solemnizing these games should not be restored to the people of Vienna; *and would to God*, added he, *they could be abolished at Rome too!* This, you will say, was an instance of great * firmness: but it is nothing uncommon in Mauricus. He gave as strong a proof of his honest freedom, before the late emperor Nerva. Being at supper one evening with that prince and a few select friends, Veiento † was placed next to the emperor: after I have named the man, I need say no more to raise your indignation. The discourse happened to turn upon Catullus Messalinus, who had a soul as dark as his body; for he was not only cursed with want of sight, but want of humanity. As he was influenced either by fear, shame, or compassion, he proved a very proper instrument in the hand of Domitian to execute his black purposes against every man of worth. The company gave their sentiments of the sanguinary counsels and infamous practices of this creature. “And what,” said the emperor, “would have been his fate had he lived *now?*” *To have jumped with us*, replied Mauricus. But to return from this long digression, into which, however, I did not fall undesignedly:—It was determined these games should be suppressed, which had greatly infected the man-

* Trajan was fond of this kind of entertainments, and had himself exhibited some very splendid ones, upon his triumph over the Dacians.

† An infamous sycophant frequently mentioned by Juvenal.

ners of the people of Vienna ; as they have universally had the same effect among us. But the vices of the Viennenses are confined within their own walls ; ours have a more extensive influence : for it is in the body politic, as in the natural, those disorders are most dangerous that flow from the head. Farewell.

Epist. XXIII. PLINY to POMPONIUS BASSUS.

I Have taken great pleasure to hear from our common friends, that you support the dignity of ease in your agreeable retirement, as becomes a man of your distinguished wisdom ; that you mix exercise with contemplation, and learned conferences with much reading ; in a word, that you are daily increasing that glorious fund of knowledge you already possess. This is to grow old in a way worthy of one who has discharged the highest offices both civil and military, and who gave himself wholly up to the service of the commonwealth, whilst it became him to do so. Our youth and manhood we owe to our country, but our declining age is due to ourselves ; as the laws themselves seem to suggest, which resign us up to retirement, when we are arrived beyond our sixtieth year *. How do I long for the time when I shall enjoy that happy privilege ! when my years will justify my following the example of your honourable retreat ! when my retirement shall not be deemed indolence, but repose ! Farewell.

* A senator was not obliged to attend the business of the house, after that age. Seneca de Civ. vit. c. 20.

Epist. XXIV. PLINY to VALENS.

WHen I lately pleaded before the centumviri, in their four courts of justice, it occurred to me, that when I was a youth I was also concerned in one which passed through the same courts. I could not forbear, as usual, to pursue the reflection my mind had started, and to consider if there were any of those advocates then present, who were joined with me in the former cause, but I found I was the only person remaining who had been counsel in both : such changes does the instability of human nature, or the vicissitudes of fortune produce ! Death had removed some ; banishment others ; age and infirmities had silenced those, while these were withdrawn to enjoy the happiness of retirement ; one was at the head of an army ; and the indulgence of the prince had exempted another from the burthen of civil employments. What turns of fortune have I experienced even in my own person ! It was eloquence that first raised me ; it was eloquence that occasioned my disgrace ; and it was eloquence that advanced me again. The friendships of the wise and good at my first appearance in the world, were highly serviceable to me ; the same friendships proved afterward extremely prejudicial to my interest, and now again they are my ornament and support. If you compute the time in which these incidents have happened, it is but a few years ; if you number the events, it seems an age. A lesson that will teach us to check both our despair and presumption, when we observe such a variety of revolutions roll round in so swift and narrow a circle. It is my custom to communicate to my friend all my thoughts, and to set before him the same rules and examples, by which I regulate my own conduct :

duct: and such was my design in this letter. Farewell.

Epist. XXV. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

I Formerly wrote you, that it was to be feared inconveniencies would arise from the method of voting by ballots. It hath so happened. At the last election of magistrates, upon some of the tablets were written several pieces of pleasantry, and even indecencies; in one particularly, instead of the name of the candidate, was inserted the names of those who espoused his interest. The senate was extremely exasperated at this insolence; and with one voice threatened the vengeance of the emperor upon the author. But he lay concealed, and possibly might be in the number of those who expressed the greatest indignation. What must one think of such a man's private conduct, who in public, upon so important an affair, and at so solemn a time, could indulge himself in such scurrilous liberties, and dare to act the droll in the face of the senate? *Who will know it*, is the argument that prompts little and base minds to commit these indecencies. Secure from being discovered by others, and unawed by any self-respect, they take their pen and tablets; and hence arise these buffooneries, which are fit only for the stage. What course shall we take, what remedy apply against this abuse? our disorders indeed in general, have every where eluded all attempts to restrain them. But this is a point much too high for us, and will be the care of that superior power, who, by these low but daring insults, has daily fresh occasions of exerting all his pains and vigilance. Farewell.

Epist. XXVI. PLINY to NEPOS.

YOU desire I should cause such of my treatises as you have most carefully collected, be read over and corrected. I shall most certainly comply with your request; as indeed there is nothing I ought to do with more readiness, especially at your instance. When a man of such dignity, learning, and eloquence, deeply engaged in business, and entering upon the important government of a province, has so good an opinion of my compositions as to think them worth taking with him, how am I obliged to endeavour that this part of his baggage may not seem an useless embarrassment? My first care therefore shall be, that they may attend you with all the advantages possible; and my next, to supply you at your return with others, which you may not think undeserving to be added to them; for I can have no stronger encouragement to enter upon some new design, than being assured of finding a reader of your taste and discernment. Farewell.

Epist. XXVII. PLINY to FALCO.

THIS is the third day that I have attended Sentius Augurinus in reciting his poems, which I heard not only with great pleasure, but even admiration. They are conceived with much delicacy and elegance, and abound with numberless strokes of tenderness and sublimity, of wit and satire. I am of opinion, there has not any thing for these many years appeared more finished of the kind; if indeed my great affection for him and the praises he bestows upon me, do not bias my judgment. He introduces his poems with observing, that I sometimes amuse

use myself with writing verses. If I can recollect the second line of this introduction, (for the rest I remember, and have often repeated), you shall judge if my sentiments of them are just :

*Sweetly flow my tender lays,
Like Calvus' or Catullus' strains,
(Bards approv'd of ancient days !)
Where love in all its softness reigns.*

*Nit wherefore ancient poets name ?
Let Pliny my example be :
Him the sacred nine inflame ;
More than ancient poets he !*

*To mutual love he tunes the lay,
While for the noisy war he flies :
Say then ye grave, ye formal lay,
Who shall gentle love despise ?*

You see with what sprightliness of imagination, what propriety of sentiment, what clearness of expression the whole is wrought up ; and in this taste, I will venture to assure you, you will find his performance in general, which I will send you as soon as it shall be published. In the mean while, admit this excellent youth into a share of your affection, and congratulate our age on the production of such a genius, whose virtues render him still more illustrious. He spends his time partly with Spurinna, and partly with Antoninus ; he has the honour to be related to one, and to be the companion of both. You will easily imagine what uncommon virtues he must possess, who is thus the favourite of two such venerable old men : for the poet's observation is most undoubtedly true.

*Those who in close society are join'd,
In manners equal, you will ever find.* Euripid.
Farewell.

Epist. XXVIII. PLINY to SEVERUS.

HErennius Severus, a man of great learning, is greatly desirous to have the pictures of two of your countrymen, Cornelius Nepos, and Titus Cassius, to adorn his library; and has entreated me, if they are to be met with where you are (as probably they may), that I would procure copies of them for him. That care I recommend to you, rather than to any other, not only because I know your friendship for me readily inclines you to comply with my requests; but as being sensible of the high regard you have for learning and all her friends; and that your affection and veneration for those who have been an ornament to your country, is equal to that which you bear towards your country herself. I beg therefore you would employ some skilful hand in this work; for if it is difficult to catch a likeness from the life, it is much more so to preserve it in a copy; from which I desire you would not suffer the painter to deviate, not even for the better. Farewell.

Epist. XXIX. PLINY to ROMANUS.

AWake, my friend! you must, at any rate, take your place upon the bench the next time the court sits. In vain would your indolence repose itself under my protection; for there is no absenting with impunity. Behold that severe prætor, the bold Licinius Nepos, fining even a mighty senator for the same neglect! The senator pleaded his cause in person; but pleaded in suppliant tone. The fine, it is true, was remitted; but sore was his dismay, but humble his intercessions, but sad his necessity of being obliged to ask pardon. All magistrates in that office,
you

you will tell me perhaps, are not thus formidably rigid. In good earnest, however, you may be mistaken: for though indeed, to be the author and reviver of an example of this kind, may be an act of severity; yet when once it is introduced, even lenity herself may follow the precedent. Farewell.

Epist. XXX. PLINY to LICINIUS SURA.

I Have brought you, out of my own country, instead of a present, a query which well deserves the consideration of your extensive erudition. There is a spring which runs in a neighbouring mountain, and turning among the rocks is received into a little banquetting-room, from whence, after being detained a short time, it falls into the Larian lake. The nature of this spring is extremely surprising; it ebbs and flows regularly three times a-day. This increase and decrease is plainly visible, and very entertaining to observe. You sit down by the side of the fountain, and whilst you are taking a repast and drinking its water, which is extremely cool, you see it gradually rise, and fall. If you place a ring or any thing else at the bottom when it is dry, the stream reaches it by degrees till it is entirely covered, and then again gently retires from it; and this you may see it do for three times successively. Shall we say, that some secret current of air stops and opens the fountain-head, as it advances to, or recedes from it; as we see in bottles, and other vessels of that nature, where there is not a free and open passage, though you turn their necks downwards, yet the outward air obstructing the vent, they discharge their contents as it were by starts? Or may it not be accounted for upon the same principle as the flux and reflux of the sea? Or,

as those rivers which discharge themselves into the sea, meeting with contrary-winds and the swell of the ocean, are forced back in their channels; so may there not be something that checks this fountain, for a time, in its progress? Or is there rather a certain reservoir that contains these waters in the bowels of the earth, which while it is recruiting its discharges, the stream flows more slowly and in less quantity, but when it has collected its due measure, it runs again in its usual strength and fulness? Or lastly, is there I know not what kind of subterraneous poize, that throws up the water when the fountain is dry, and repels it when it is full! You, who are so well qualified for the inquiry, will examine the reasons * of this wonderful appearance; it will be

* There are several of these periodical fountains in different parts of the world; as we have some in England. Lay-well near Torbay, is mentioned in the Philosophical Transactions, [N^o 104. p. 909.], to ebb and flow several times every hour. The reasons of this kind of springs are of no very easy solution, and the causes assigned by modern philosophers are scarce more satisfactory than those pointed out by the ancients: perhaps they do not depend upon any general principle, but arise from different causes according to their respective situations. The conjecture which Mr Addison offers in accounting for those he saw in Switzerland, seems plausible enough, and equally applicable to this fountain mentioned by Pliny; as it is probable it took its rise from the same mountains. “We saw,” says that inimitable author in his description of Geneva and the lake, “in several
 “parts of the Alps that bordered upon us, vast pits
 “of snow; as several mountains that lie at a greater
 “distance, are wholly covered with it. I fancied
 “the confusion of mountains and hollows I here ob-
 “served,

be sufficient for me if I have given you a clear description of it. Farewell.

B O O K V.



Epist. I. PLINY to SEVERUS.

A Small legacy which was lately left me, has given me much greater pleasure than I should have received by a far more considerable one from any other person. Pomponia Gratilla, having disinherited her son Affudius Curianus, appointed me, and Sertorius Severus of prætorian rank, together with several eminent Roman knights, her coheirs. The son applied to me to give him my share of the inheritance, in order to make use of my name as a precedent a-

“ served, furnished me with a more probable reason
 “ than any I have met with, for these periodical
 “ fountains in Switzerland, which flow only at par-
 “ ticular hours of the day. For as the tops of these
 “ mountains cast their shadows upon one another,
 “ they hinder the sun’s shining on several parts at
 “ such certain times, so that there are several heaps
 “ of snow which have the sun lying upon them for
 “ two or three hours together, and are in the shade
 “ all the day afterward. If therefore it happens,
 “ that any particular fountain takes its rise from any
 “ of these reservoirs of snow, it will naturally begin
 “ to flow on such hours of the day as the snow begins
 “ to melt : but as soon as the sun leaves it again to
 “ freeze and harden, the fountain dries up, and re-
 “ ceives no more supplies, till about the same time
 “ the next day, when the heat of the sun again sets
 “ the snows a-running that fall into the same little
 “ conduits, traces, and canals, and by consequence
 “ break out and discover themselves always in the
 “ same place.” Addison’s trav. 353.

gainst

gainst the rest of the heirs ; but offered at the same time to enter into a secret agreement to return my proportion back to me. I told him, it was by no means agreeable to my character to carry the appearance of acting one thing, whilst I was, in truth, acting another ; and that there was something of meanness in making presents to a man of his fortune, who had no children : besides that it would not at all answer the purpose at which he was aiming. Indeed, (I added), if I were to withdraw my claim, it might be of some service to him ; and this I was ready and willing to do, if he could prove to me that he was unjustly disinherited. “ Let me prevail with “ you then,” said he, “ to be my arbitrator in this “ case.” After a short pause, I told him I consented to his proposal : “ for why,” said I, “ should I “ not have as good an opinion of my own impar- “ tial disinterestedness as you seem to have ? But “ remember I am not to be prevailed upon to de- “ cide the point in question against your mother, “ if it should appear she had just reason for what “ she has done. Be it agreeable to your inclina- “ tion,” said he, “ which I am sure is always to “ act according to justice.” I called to my assistance Corellius and Frontinus, two of the most considerable lawyers which Rome at that time afforded. Attended with those friends, I heard the cause in my chamber. Curianus said every thing which he thought could favour his pretensions, to whom (as there was no body but myself to defend the character of Gratilla) I made a short reply ; after which I retired with my friends to deliberate upon the case, and then returned and acquainted Curianus, that it was our opinion his conduct had justly drawn upon him his mother’s resentment. Some time afterward, Curianus commenced a suit in the centumviral court against all the coheirs except myself. The day appointed for the

the trial approaching, the rest of the coheirs were desirous of compromising the affair; not out of any diffidence of their cause, but from a distrust of the times. They were apprehensive, what had been the case of many others might happen to them, and that from a civil suit it should end in a capital one; as there were some amongst them to whom the friendship of Gratilla and Rusticus * might be extremely prejudicial: they therefore desired me to go and talk with Curianus. We met in the temple of Concord: "Suppose," said I, "your mother had left you the fourth part of her estate, or even suppose she had made you sole heir, but had exhausted so much of the estate in legacies that there would not be more than a fourth part remaining to you; could you justly have complained? You ought to be contented therefore, if being absolutely disinherited, as you are, the heirs are willing to relinquish to you a fourth part; which however I will increase by contributing my proportion. You know you did not commence any suit against me, so that the prescription which I have gained by two years peaceable possession, secures my share from any claim you can set up against it. But to induce you to come into the proposals on the part of the coheirs, and that you may be no sufferer by the peculiar respect you shewed to me, I offer to contribute my proportion with them."—The silent satisfaction of my own conscience is not the only pleasure this transaction has afforded me; it

* Gratilla was the wife of Rusticus: Rusticus was put to death by Domitian, and Gratilla banished. It was a sufficient crime in the reign of that execrable prince to be even a friend of those who were obnoxious to him.

has contributed greatly to my reputation. It is this same Curianus who has left me the legacy I mentioned in the beginning of my letter, which I received as a very honourable mark of his approbation of my behaviour in this affair, so agreeable (if I do not flatter myself) to the true spirit of ancient integrity. I have given you this account, because in all my joys and sorrows I look upon you as myself, and I thought it would be unkind not to communicate to so tender a friend whatever occasions me pleasure; as I confess this circumstance has: for I do not pretend to such refined strains of philosophy as to be indifferent, when I think I have done honestly, whether my actions meet with that approbation which is in some sort their reward. Farewell.

Epist. II. PLINY to FLACCUS:

THE * thrushes I received from you were so excellent, that my Laurentinum is not capable of supplying me with any thing in this tempestuous season, either of the land or sea kind, to make you a suitable return. I have only therefore to send you the ineffectual acknowledgments of a barren letter: an exchange more unequal, I confess, than that famous one of the subtle Diomed. But your good nature will so much the more readily grant me an excuse, as I own myself not to deserve one. Farewell.

Epist. III. PLINY to ARISTO.

AMONGST the many agreeable and obliging instances I have received of your friendship,

* These birds, of which there are several sorts, were in high reputation among the Romans, and generally had a place upon all elegant tables.

your

your not concealing from me the long conversation which lately passed at your house concerning my verses, and the various judgments pronounced upon them, is by no means the least. There were some, it seems, who did not disapprove of my poems, but at the same time censured me in a free and friendly manner, for employing myself in composing and reciting them. I am so far, however, from desiring to extenuate the charge, that I willingly acknowledge myself still more deserving of it; and confess that I sometimes amuse myself with writing verses, and verses too of the gayer kind. I compose comedies; divert myself with pantomimes; read the lyric poets; and enter into the spirit of the most wanton muse; in short, I am nothing averse to pleasantries, mirth, and gaiety; and to sum up every kind of innocent amusement in one word, *I am a man*. I am not at all displeased, that those who are ignorant that the most learned, the wisest, and the best of men have employed themselves in the same way, should be surprised at my doing so: but those who know what noble examples I follow, will allow me, I trust, thus to err; but to err with those whom it is an honour to imitate, not only in their most serious actions, but lightest amusements. Is it unbecoming me (I will not name any living example, lest I should seem to flatter), but is it unbecoming me to practise what became Tully, Calvus, Pollio, Messala, Hortensius, Brutus, Sulla, Catulus, Scævola, Sulpitius, Varro, the Torquati, Memmius, Lentulus, Gætulicus, Seneca, and in our own memory, Verginius Rufus? But if the examples of private men are not sufficient to justify me, I can cite Julius Cæsar, Augustus, Nerva, and Titus. I forbear to add Nero to the catalogue; though I am sensible what is sometimes practised by the worst of men does not therefore degenerate into wrong; on the contrary,

contrary, it still maintains its credit, if frequently countenanced by the best. In that number Virgil, Cornelius Nepos, and prior to these, Ennius, and Accius, justly deserve the most distinguished place. These last indeed were not senators, but virtue knows no distinction of rank or title. I recite my works, it is true, and in this I am not sure I can support myself by their examples. They, perhaps might be satisfied with their own judgment ; but I have too humble an opinion of mine, to suppose my compositions sufficiently perfect, because they appear so to me. My reasons then for reciting are, that there is a certain reverence for one's audience, which fires the imagination and excites a more vigorous application ; and that I have by this means an opportunity of settling any doubts I may have concerning my performance, by observing the general sentiments of my hearers. In a word, I have the advantage of receiving different hints from different persons : and though they should not declare their sentiments in express terms, yet the air of a countenance, the turn of a head or eye, the motion of a hand, a whisper, or even silence itself, will easily distinguish their real judgment from the language of civility : so that if any one of my audience should have the curiosity to peruse the same performance which he heard me read, he may find several things altered or omitted, and perhaps too upon his judgment, though he did not say a single word to me. But I am defending my conduct in this particular as if I had actually recited my works in public, and not in my own house before my friends ; a numerous appearance of whom has upon many occasions been held an honour, but never surely a reproach. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. IV. PLINY to VALERIANUS.

THE fact which I am going to mention, though in itself of no great importance, may be attended with very considerable consequences. Sollers, a person of prætorian rank, petitioned the senate for leave to hold a fair upon his estate. He was opposed in this by the deputies from the Vicentini, who employed Tuscilius Nominatus as their counsel. The cause was adjourned; and at the next meeting the deputies appeared unattended with their counsel, complaining that they had been grossly deceived: an expression, which whether it dropped from them in the warmth of resentment, or that they really thought so, I will not determine. Nepos the prætor asked them who it was they had retained? They replied, the same person who was counsel for them before. Being farther asked, whether he then appeared for them without any gratuity? They informed the house that they had given him six thousand sesterces, and afterwards presented him with a second fee of one thousand denarii. Upon which, Nepos moved that Nominatus should be ordered to attend. And this is all that was done in the affair that day; but unless I am greatly mistaken, the inquiry will not end here; for one may observe in several instances, the slightest sparks have lighted up a train of very remote consequences. And now I have sufficiently raised your curiosity, I imagine, to make you desirous I should inform you of the rest; unless you should chuse to gratify it by coming to Rome, and had rather see than read the sequel. Farewell.

Epist. V. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

I Am deeply afflicted with the news I have received of the death of Fannius, not only as I have lost in him a friend whose eloquence and politeness I admired, but a guide whose judgment I pursued: and indeed he possessed a most penetrating genius, improved and quickened by great experience. There are some circumstances attending his death, which aggravate my concern. He left behind him a will which had been made a considerable time, by which it happens his estate is fallen into the hands of those who had incurred his displeasure, while his greatest favourites had no share of it. But what I particularly regret is, that he has left unfinished a very noble work in which he was engaged. Notwithstanding his full employment at the bar, he had undertaken a history of those persons who had been put to death or banished by Nero; of which he had perfected three books. They are written with great delicacy and exactness; the style is pure, and preserves a proper medium between the plain narrative and the historical: and as they were very favourably received by the public, he was the more desirous of being able to complete the rest. The hand of death is ever, in my estimation, too severe and too sudden when it falls upon such as are employed in some immortal work. The sons of sensuality, who have no views beyond the present honour, terminate with each day the whole purpose of their lives; but those who look forward to posterity, and endeavour to extend their memories to future generations by useful labours;—to such, death is always immature, as it still snatches them from amidst some unfinished design. Fannius, long before his death, had a strong presentiment of what has happened: he dreamed

dreamed one night, that as he was in his study with his papers before him, Nero came in, and placing himself by his side, took up the three first books of this history; which he read through, and then went away. His dream greatly alarmed him, and he looked upon it as an intimation, that he should not carry on his history any farther than Nero had read: and so the event proved. I cannot reflect upon this accident without lamenting that he should not be able to accomplish a work, which had cost him so much pains and vigilance; as it suggests to me at the same time the thoughts of my own mortality, and the fate of my writings: and I am persuaded the same reflection alarms your apprehensions for those in which you are employed. Let us then, my friend, while yet we live, exert all our endeavours, that death, whenever it arrives, may find as little as possible to destroy. Farewell.

Epist. VI. PLINY to APOLLINARIS.

THE kind concern you expressed when you heard of my design to pass the summer at my * villa in Tuscany, and your obliging endeavours to dissuade me from going to a place which you think unhealthy, is extremely agreeable to me. I confess, indeed, the air of that part of Tuscany which lies towards the coast, is thick and unwholesome: but my house is situated at a great distance from the sea, under one of the Apennine mountains, which, of all others, is most

* This was Pliny's principal seat, lying about one hundred and fifty miles from Rome, where he usually resided in the summer-season. The reader will observe therefore, that he considers it in a very different manner from that of Laurentinum (his winter-villa) both with respect to the situation and the house itself.

esteemed for the clearness of its air. But that you may lay aside all apprehensions on my account, I will give you a description of the temperature of the climate, the situation of the country, and the beauty of my villa, which I am persuaded you will hear with as much pleasure as I shall relate. The winters are severe and cold, so that myrtles, olives, and trees of that kind which delight in constant warmth, will not flourish here; but it produces bay-trees in great perfection; yet sometimes, though indeed not oftener than in the neighbourhood of Rome, they are killed by the sharpness of the seasons. The summers are exceedingly temperate, and continually attended with refreshing breezes, which are seldom interrupted by high winds. If you were to come here and see the numbers of old men who have lived to be grandfathers and great-grandfathers, and hear the stories they can entertain you with of their ancestors, you would fancy yourself born in some former age. The disposition of the country is the most beautiful that can be imagined: figure to yourself an immense amphitheatre; but such as the hand of nature could only form. Before you lies a vast extended plain bounded by a range of mountains, whose summits are crowned with lofty and venerable woods, which supply variety of game: from hence, as the mountains decline, they are adorned with under-woods. Intermixed with these are little hills of so strong and fat a soil, that it would be difficult to find a single stone upon them; their fertility is nothing inferior to the lowest grounds; and though their harvest, indeed, is something later, their crops are as well matured. At the foot of these hills the eye is presented, where-ever it turns, with one unbroken view of numberless vineyards, which are terminated by a border, as it were, of fl.ubs. From thence you have a prospect

spect of the adjoining fields and meadows below. The soil of the former is so extremely stiff, and upon the first ploughing it rises in such vast clods, that it is necessary to go over it nine several times with the largest oxen and the strongest ploughs, before they can be thoroughly broken; whilst the enamelled meadows produce trefoil, and other kinds of herbage as fine and tender as if it were but just sprung up, being continually refreshed by never-failing rills. But though the country abounds with great plenty of water, there are no marshes; for as it is a rising ground, whatever water it receives without absorbing, runs off into the Tiber. This river, which winds through the middle of the meadows, is navigable only in the winter and spring, when it transports the produce of the lands to Rome: but its channel is so extremely low in summer, that it scarce deserves the name of a river: towards the autumn however, it begins again to renew its claim to that title. You could not be more agreeably entertained, than by taking a view of the face of this country from the top of one of our neighbouring mountains: you would imagine that not a real, but some painted landscape lay before you, drawn with the most exquisite beauty and exactness; such an harmonious and regular variety charms the eye which way soever it throws itself. My villa is so advantageously situated, that it commands a full view of all the country round; yet you go up to it by so insensible a rise, that you find yourself upon an elevation without perceiving you ascended. Behind, but at a great distance, stand the Apennine mountains. In the calmest days we are refreshed by the winds that blow from thence, but so spent, as it were, by the long tract of land they travel over, that they are entirely divested of all their strength and violence before they reach us. The exposition of the prin-

cipal front of the house is full south, and seems to invite the afternoon sun in summer (but something earlier in winter) into a spacious and well-proportioned portico, consisting of several members, particularly a porch built after the manner of the ancients. In the front of the portico is a sort of terrace, embellished with various figures, and bounded with a box-hedge, from whence you descend by an easy slope, adorned with the representation of divers animals in box answering alternately to each other, into a lawn overspread with the soft, I had almost said the liquid acanthus: this is surrounded by a walk inclosed with tonfile ever-greens, shaped into a variety of forms. Beyond it is the gressatio laid out in the form of a circus, ornamented in the middle with box cut in numberless different figures, together with a plantation of shrubs prevented by the sheers from running up too high: The whole is fenced in with a wall covered by box, rising by different ranges to the top. On the outside of the wall lies a meadow that owes as many beauties to nature, as all I have been describing within does to art; at the end of which are several other meadows and fields interspersed with thickets. At the extremity of the portico stands a grand dining-room, which opens upon one end of the terrace; as from the windows there is a very extensive prospect over the meadows up into the country, from whence you also have a view of the terrace and such parts of the house which project forward, together with the woods inclosing the adjacent hippodrome. Opposite almost to the centre of the portico stands an apartment something backwards, which encompasses a small area, shaded by four plane-trees, in the midst of which a fountain rises, from whence the water running over the edges of a marble basin gently refreshes the surrounding plane-trees and the verdure underneath

derneath them. This apartment consists of a bedchamber free from every kind of noise, and which the light itself cannot penetrate; together with a common dining-room that I use whenever I have none but familiar friends with me. A second portico looks upon this little area, and has the same prospect with the former I just now described. There is, besides, another room, which being situated close to the nearest plane-tree, enjoys a constant shade and verdure: its sides are incrustated half-way with carved marble, and from thence to the ceiling a foliage is painted with birds intermixed among the branches, which has an effect altogether as agreeable as that of the carving; at the basis of which is placed a little fountain, that playing through several small pipes into a vase, produces a most pleasing murmur. From a corner of the portico you enter into a very spacious chamber opposite to the grand dining-room, which from some of its windows has a view of the terrace, and from others of the meadow, as those in the front look upon a cascade, which entertains at once both the eye and the ear; for the water falling from a great height, foams round the marble basin which receives it below. This room is extremely warm in winter, being much exposed to the sun, as in a cloudy day the heat of an adjoining stove very well supplies his absence. From hence you pass through a spacious and pleasant undressing room into the cold bath room, in which is a large gloomy bath: but if you are disposed to swim more at large, or in warmer water, in the middle of the area is a wide basin for that purpose, and near it a reservoir from whence you may be supplied with cold water to brace yourself again, if you should perceive you are too much relaxed by the warm. Contiguous to the cold bath is one of a middling degree of heat, which enjoys the kindly warmth of
of

of the sun, but not so intensely as that of the hot bath, which projects farther. This last consists of three several divisions, each of different degrees of heat; the two former lie open to the full sun, the latter, though not so much exposed to his heat, receives an equal share of its light. Over the undressing room is built the tennis-court, which, by means of different circles, admits of different kinds of games. Not far from the baths, is the stair-case which leads to the inclosed portico, after having first passed through three apartments: one of these looks upon the little area with the four plane-trees round it, the other has a sight of the meadows, and from the third you have a view of several vineyards, so that they have as many different prospects as expositions. At one end of the inclosed portico, and indeed taken off from it, is a chamber that looks upon the hippodrome, the vineyards, and the mountains; adjoining is a room which has a full exposure to the sun, especially in winter: from hence runs an apartment that connects the hippodrome with the house: and such is the form and aspect of the front. On the side is a summer inclosed portico which stands high, and has not only a prospect of the vineyards, but seems almost to touch them. From the middle of this portico you enter a dining-room cooled by the wholesome breezes which come from the Apennine valleys: from the windows in the back front, which are extremely large, there is a prospect of the vineyards, as you have also another view of them from the folding-doors through the summer-portico: along that side of this dining-room where there are no windows, runs a private stair-case for the greater conveniency of serving at entertainments: at the farther end of a chamber from whence the eye is entertained with a view of the vineyards, and (what is equally agreeable) of the portico.

portico. Underneath this room is an inclosed portico something resembling a grotto, which enjoying, in the midst of summer-heats, its own natural coolness, neither admits nor wants the refreshment of external breezes. After you have passed both these porticoes, at the end of the dining room stands a third, which, as the day is more or less advanced, serves either for winter or summer use. It leads to two different apartments, one containing four chambers, the other three, which enjoy by turns both sun and shade. In the front of these agreeable buildings lies a very spacious hippodrome, entirely open in the middle, by which means the eye, upon your first entrance, takes in its whole extent at one view. It is encompassed on every side with plane-trees covered with ivy, so that while their heads flourish with their own green, their bodies enjoy a borrowed verdure; and thus the ivy twining round the trunk and branches, spreads from tree to tree, and connects them together. Between each plane-tree are planted box-trees, and behind these, bay-trees, which blend their shade with that of the planes. This plantation, forming a straight boundary on both sides of the hippodrome, bends at the farther end into a semicircle, which being set round and sheltered with cypress-trees, varies the prospect, and casts a deep and more gloomy shade; while the inward circular walks (for there are several) enjoying an open exposure, are perfumed with roses, and correct, by a very pleasing contrast, the coolness of the shade with the warmth of the sun. Having passed through these several winding alleys, you enter a straight walk, which breaks out into a variety of others, divided off by box-hedges. In one place you have a little meadow; in another the box is cut into a thousand different forms; sometimes into letters, expressing the name of the master; sometimes that
of

of the artificer: whilst here and there little obelisks rise intermixed alternately with fruit-trees: when on a sudden, in the midst of this elegant regularity, you are surpris'd with an imitation of the negligent beauties of rural nature; in the centre of which lies a spot surrounded with a knot of dwarf plane-trees. Beyond these is a walk interspersed with the smooth and twining acanthus, where the trees are also cut into a variety of names and shapes. At the upper end is an alcove of white marble, shaded with vines, supported by four small Carystian pillars. From this bench the water gushing through several little pipes, as if it were pressed out by the weight of the persons who repose themselves upon it, falls into a stone cistern underneath, from whence it is received into a fine polished marble basin, so artfully contrived, that it is always full without ever overflowing. When I sup here, this basin serves for a table, the larger sort of dishes being placed round the margin, while the smaller ones swim about in the form of little vessels and water-fowl. Corresponding to this, is a fountain which is incessantly emptying and filling; for the water which it throws up a great height, falling back again into it, is by means of two openings returned as fast as it is received. Fronting the alcove (and which reflects as great an ornament to it as it borrows from it) stands a summer-house of exquisite marble, whose doors project and open into a green inclosure; as from its upper and lower windows the eye is presented with a variety of different verdures. Next to this is a little private closet (which though it seems distinct, may be laid into the same room) furnished with a couch; and notwithstanding it has windows on every side, yet it enjoys a very agreeable gloominess, by means of a spreading vine which climbs to the top, and entirely overshades it. Here you
may

may lie and fancy yourself in a wood, with this difference only, that you are not exposed to the weather: in this place a fountain also rises and instantly disappears: in different quarters are disposed several marble seats, which serve no less than the summer-house, as so many reliefs after one is wearied with walking. Near each seat is a little fountain; and throughout the whole hippodrome several small rills run murmuring along, wheresoever the hand of art thought proper to conduct them, watering here and there different spots of vedure, and in their progress refreshing the whole.

And now, I should not have hazarded the imputation of being too minute in this detail, if I had not proposed to lead you into every corner of my house and gardens. You will hardly, I imagine, think it a trouble to read the description of a place, which I am persuaded would please you, were you to see it; especially as you have it in your power to stop, and by throwing aside my letter, sit down as it were, and rest yourself as often as you think proper. I had at the same time a view to the gratification of my own passion: as I confess, I have a very great one for this villa, which was chiefly built or finished by myself. In a word, (for why should I conceal from my friend my sentiments, whether right or wrong?), I look upon it as the first duty of every writer frequently to throw his eyes upon his title-page, and to consider well the subject he has proposed to himself; and he may be assured, if he closely pursues his plan, he cannot justly be thought tedious; but on the contrary, if he suffers himself to be carried off from it, he will most certainly incur that censure. Homer, you know, has employed many verses in the description of the arms of Achilles, as Virgil also has in those of Æneas; yet neither of them are prolix, because

cause they both keep within the limits of their original design. Aratus, you see, is not esteemed too circumstantial, though he traces and enumerates the minutest stars; for he does not go out of his way for that purpose, he only follows where his subjects lead him. In the same manner (to compare small things with great), if endeavouring to give you an idea of my house, I have not wandered into any thing foreign, or, as it were, devious, it is not my letter which describes, but my villa which is described, that is to be deemed large. But not to dwell any longer upon this digression, lest I should myself be condemned by the maxim I have just laid down; I have now informed you why I prefer my Tuscan villa, to those which I possess at Tusculum, Tibur, and Præneste. Besides the advantages already mentioned, I here enjoy a more profound retirement, as I am at a farther distance from the business of the town, and the interruption of troublesome avocations. All is calm and composed; which contributes, no less than its clear air and unclouded sky, to that health of body and cheerfulness of mind which I particularly enjoy here: both of which I keep in proper exercise by study and hunting. And indeed there is no place which agrees better with all my family in general; I am sure at least, I have not yet lost one (and I speak it with the sentiments I ought) of all those I brought with me hither: and may the gods continue that happiness to me, and that honour to my villa! Farewell.

Epist. VII. PLINY to CALVISIUS.

IT is certain the law does not allow a corporate city to inherit any estate by will, or to receive a legacy. Saturninus however, who has appointed me his heir, had left a fourth part of his

his estate to our corporation of Comum ; which devise he afterwards changed into an absolute legacy of 400,000 sesterces. This bequest, in a legal view, is undoubtedly void ; but considered as the clear and express will of the dead, ought to stand firm and valid : a consideration in my opinion (though I am afraid the lawyers will not be pleased with what I say) of higher regard than any law whatsoever, especially when the interest of one's country is concerned. It would be extremely inconsistent in me, who made them a present of eleven hundred thousand sesterces out of my own patrimony, to withhold from them a benefaction of a little more than a third part of that sum out of an estate which is entirely adventitious. You, who, like a true patriot, have the same affection for this our common country, will join with me, I dare say, in these sentiments. I wish therefore you would, at the next assembly of the decurii, acquaint them, in a respectful manner, how the law stands in this case, and at the same time let them know that I shall not take advantage of it, but will pay them the 400,000 sesterces according to the directions in the will of Saturninus. You will represent it as his present and his liberality ; I only claim the merit of complying with his request. I forbear writing to their senate concerning this affair, fully relying upon your friendship and prudence, and being assured that you are both able and willing to act for me upon this occasion as I would for myself ; besides, I am afraid I should not seem to have preserved that just medium in my letter, which you will much easier be able to do in a speech. The countenance, the gesture, and even the tone of voice governs and determines the sense of the speaker : whereas a letter being destitute of these advantages, is more liable to the

malignant interpretation of those who are inclined to pervert its meaning. Farewell.

Epist. VIII. PLINY to CAPITO.

YOU are not singular in the advice you give me to undertake the writing of history; it is a work which has been frequently pressed upon me by several others of my friends; and what I have some thoughts of engaging in. Not that I have any confidence of succeeding in this way; that would be too rashly presuming upon the event of an experiment which I have never yet made; but because it is a noble employment to rescue from oblivion those who deserve to be eternally remembered, and extend the reputation of others, at the same time that we advance our own. Nothing, I confess, so strongly affects me as the desire of a lasting name: a passion highly worthy of the human breast, especially of one, who not being conscious to himself of any ill, is not afraid of being known to posterity. It is the continual subject therefore of my thoughts,

By what fair deed I too may rise a name:

for so that I moderate my wishes; the rest,

And gain a round the world immortal fame,

is much beyond my hopes:

Though yet——However the first is sufficient, and history perhaps is the single means that can assure it to me. Oratory and poetry, unless carried to the highest point of eloquence, are talents but of small recommendation to those who possess them; but history however executed is always entertaining. Mankind are naturally inquisitive; and are so fond of having this turn gratified, that they will listen with attention to the plainest matter of fact, and the most idle tale.

But

But besides this, I have an example in my own family that inclines me to engage in this study, my uncle and adoptive father having acquired great reputation as a very accurate historian; and the philosophers, you know, recommend it to us to tread in the steps of our ancestors, when they have gone before us in the right path. If you ask me then, why do I not immediately enter upon the task? My reason is this: I have pleaded some very important causes, and (though I am not extremely sanguine in my hopes concerning them) I have determined to revise my speeches, lest, for want of this remaining labour, all the pains they cost me should be thrown away, and they with their author be buried in oblivion: for with respect to posterity, the work that was never finished, was never begun. You will think, perhaps, I might correct my pleadings and write history at the same time. I wish indeed I were capable of doing so, but they are both such great undertakings, that either of them is abundantly sufficient. I was but nineteen when I first appeared at the bar; and yet it is only now at last I understand (and that in truth but imperfectly) what is essential to a complete orator. How then shall I be able to support the weight of an additional burthen? It is true, indeed, history and oratory have in many points a general resemblance; yet in those very things in which they seem to agree, there are several circumstances wherein they differ. Narration is common to them both; but it is a narration of a distinct kind. The former contents itself frequently with low and vulgar facts; the latter requires every thing splendid, elevated, and extraordinary: strength and nerves is sufficient in that, but beauty and ornament is essential to this: the excellency of the one consists in a strong, severe, and close style; of the other, in a diffusive, flow-

ing, and harmonious narration : in short, the words, the emphasis, and whole turn and structure of the periods are extremely different in these two arts. For, as Thucydides observes, there is a wide distance between compositions which are calculated for a present purpose, and those which are designed to remain as lasting monuments to posterity ; by the first of which expressions he alludes to oratory, and by the other to history. For these reasons I am not inclined to blend together two performances of such different natures, which, as they are both of the highest rank, necessarily therefore require a separate attention ; lest, confounded by a croud of different ideas, I should introduce into the one what is only proper to the other. Therefore (to speak in our language of the bar) I must *beg leave the cause may be adjourned some time longer*. In the mean while, I refer it to your consideration from what period I shall commence my history. Shall I take it up from those remote times which have been treated of already by others ? In this way, indeed, the materials will be ready prepared to my hands, but the collating of the several historians will be extremely troublesome : or, shall I write only of the present times, and those wherein no other author has gone before me ? If so, I may probably give offence to many, and please but few. For, in an age so over-run with vice, you will find infinitely more to condemn than approve ; yet your praise, though ever so lavish, will be thought too reserved ; and your censure, though ever so cautious, too profuse. However, this does not at all discourage me ; for I want not sufficient resolution to bear testimony to truth. I expect then, that you prepare the way which you have pointed out to me, and determine what subject I shall fix upon for my history, that when I am ready to enter upon the task you have assigned

assigned me, I may not be delayed by any new difficulty. Farewell.

Epist. IX. PLINY to SATURNINUS.

YOUR letter made very different impressions upon me, as it brought me news which I both rejoiced and grieved to receive. It gave me pleasure when it informed me you were detained in Rome; which though you will tell me is a circumstance that affords you none, yet I cannot but rejoice at it, since you assure me you continue there upon my account, and defer the recital of your work till my return; for which I am greatly obliged to you. But I was much concerned at that part of your letter which mentioned the dangerous illness of Julius Valens; though indeed, with respect to himself, it ought to affect me with other sentiments, as it cannot but be for his advantage the sooner he is relieved by death, from a distemper of which there is no hope he can ever be cured. But what you add concerning Avitus, who died in his return from the province where he had been quæstor, is an accident that justly demands our sorrow. That he died on board a ship, at a distance from his brother whom he tenderly loved, and from his mother and sisters, are circumstances, which though they cannot affect him now, yet undoubtedly did in his last moments, as well as tend to heighten the affliction of those he has left behind. How severe is the reflection, that a youth of his well-formed disposition should be extinct in the prime of life, and snatched from those high honours to which his virtues, had they been permitted to grow to their full maturity, would certainly have raised him! How did his bosom glow with the love of the fine arts! How many books has he perused! How many volumes has he transcribed! but the

fruits of his labours are now perished with him, and for ever lost to posterity. — Yet why indulge my sorrow? a passion which, if we once give a loose to it, will aggravate every the slightest circumstance. I will put an end therefore to my letter, that I may to the tears which yours have drawn from me. Farewell.

Epist. X. PLINY to ANTONINUS.

I AM never more sensible of the superior excellency of your verses, than when I endeavour to imitate them. As the hand of the painter must always fail, when perfect beauty fits for the picture; so I labour to catch the graces of my original, but still fall short of them. Let me conjure you then to continue to supply us with many more such excellent models, which every man must wish to imitate, but few, perhaps none, will be able to equal. Farewell.

Epist. XI. PLINY to TRANQUILLUS.

IT is time you should quit the promise my verses gave to our common friends, of your works. The world is every day impatiently inquiring after them, and there is some danger of your being summoned in form to give an account of your delay. I am myself a good deal backward in publishing, but you are even still slower. You must hasten your hand, however, otherwise the severity of my satire may perhaps extort from you, what the blandishments of my softer muse could not obtain. Your work is already arrived to that degree of perfection, that the file can only weaken, not polish it. Allow me then the pleasure of seeing your name in the title-page of a book, and suffer the works of my dear Tranquillus to be recited and transcribed, to be bought

bought and read. It is but fair, and agreeable to our mutual friendship, that you should give me in return the same pleasure you receive from me. Farewell.

Epist. XII. PLINY to FABATUS.

YOUR letter informs me that you have erected a noble public portico, as a memorial of yourself and your son, and that the next day after the ceremony of opening it, you engaged to repair and beautify the gates of our city at your own charge : thus it is that you rise from one act of munificence to another ! I take part, believe me, in every thing that concerns your glory ; which, from the alliance that is between us, in some degree redounds to mine ; and am pleased to see the memory of my father-in-law delivered down to posterity by such beautiful structures. I rejoice too, at the honour that hereby arises to our native province ; and as every thing that tends to her advantage is highly agreeable to me, by what hand soever it may be conferred ; so particularly when it is by yours. I have only to desire that heaven would continue to cherish in you this generous frame of mind, and to grant you many years in which to exert it : for your bounty, I am well persuaded, will not terminate here, but extend itself to farther acts of beneficence. Generosity, when once she is set forward, knows not how to stop her progress ; as the more familiar we are with the lovely form, the more enamoured we grow of her engaging charms. Farewell.

Epist. XIII. PLINY to SCAURUS.

HAVING thoughts of publishing a little speech which I have composed, I invited some of
my

my friends whose judgments I revere, to attend the recital of it; though at the same time, that I might be more secure of hearing the truth of their sentiments, I selected only a small number: for I have a double view in these rehearsals; the first is, that the zealous solicitude of approving myself to my audience may inflame my imagination; the next, that those errors which a partiality to myself may conceal from my own observation, be pointed out to me. I succeeded in my design, and my friends obliged me with their sincere opinions; as I likewise observed myself some passages which required correction. I send you the piece therefore as I have now altered it. The occasion of it will appear from the title, and for the rest I refer you to the speech itself, which I hope you will peruse so carefully, as not to stand in need of a preface to explain it. I beg you would sincerely tell me your sentiments of the whole, and of its several parts. I shall be more inclined to suppress or publish it, as your judgment shall decide either way. Farewell.

Epist. XIV. PLINY to VALERIANUS.

YOU desire me to inform you (agreeably * to my promise) what success attended Nepos in his accusation of Tuscilius Nominatus. The latter being brought before the senate, pleaded his own cause, though indeed no body appeared to support the accusation. On the contrary, the deputies from the Vicentini were so far from pursuing their charge, that they favoured his defence. The sum of what he urged in his own behalf was; “ That it was his courage and not his integrity had failed him; that he set out with a design of pleading the cause, and actually came into the senate for that purpose, but being dis-

* See letter the 4th of this book.

“ couraged

“courageed by his friends, he withdrew himself;
“that they dissuaded him from persisting to op-
“pose (especially in the senate) the inclinations
“of a senator, who did not contend so much
“for the fair itself, as for his own credit and cha-
“racter, which he looked upon as concerned in
“this cause; that if he did not desist, he would
“suffer greater indignities than in his former
“pleading.” (And there were some, though in-
deed but a few, who expressed high indignation
at his speech.) He proceeded to implore the
clemency of the senate with tears in his eyes; and
prudently endeavoured throughout his whole
speech (as he is a man extremely well versed in
the arts of oratory) to appear rather to sue for
pardon than justice. Afranius Dexter, the con-
sul elect, was for acquitting him. The purport
of his sentiments was to this effect: “That
“Nominatus would have acted more prudently
“if he had gone through the cause of the Vicen-
“tini with the same resolution he began it: how-
“ever, since it did not appear he had been guil-
“ty of this neglect with any fraudulent design,
“and that he had not been convicted of any thing
“which merited public animadversion, it was his
“opinion he ought to be acquitted; but that he
“should return to the Vicentini whatever gra-
“tuity he had received from them.” This mo-
tion was approved by the whole senate except
Flavius Aper: his opinion was, that he should be
suspended from exercising the profession of an ad-
vocate for five years; and though he could not
bring any over to his sentiments, he resolutely
persisted in them: he even obliged Dexter, who
spoke first on the opposite side, to take his oath
that he thought his motion was for the benefit
of the republic; agreeably to a law which he pro-
duced concerning the assembling of the senate.
But this, though it was certainly legal, was op-
posed

posed by some, who thought it a reflection upon Dexter, as if he had been unduly influenced in his sentiments. But before the votes of the house were collected, Nigrinus, a tribune of the people, read a very elegant and sensible remonstrance, wherein he strongly complained, that the profession of the law was become venal, and that the advocates took money, even to betray the cause of their clients; that they made a shameful trade of their function: and instead of honour, which was formerly their only reward, they now lived upon the spoils of their fellow-citizens, from whom they received large and annual salaries. He gave the senate a summary account of the laws which had been made upon this subject, and reminded them likewise of their own decrees to the same purpose: and he concluded with observing, that since both the authority of the laws and of the senate had been contemned, it was highly necessary to address the emperor, that he would be pleased himself to interpose, and provide some remedy to so great an evil. Accordingly, a few days after, an edict was published, drawn up with a proper mixture of mildness and severity; for which I refer you to the journals of the public. I cannot but congratulate myself upon this occasion, that in all the causes in which I have been concerned, I never made any bargain, or received any fee, reward, or even present whatsoever. One ought, no doubt, to avoid whatever is mean and unworthy, not so much because it is illegal, as because it is dishonourable. But still there is great satisfaction in finding the legislature levelling its prohibitions against a practice, which one never suffered one's self to fall into. The glory indeed of my conduct may, or rather most certainly will, be considerably eclipsed, when this practice shall universally prevail by necessity, which I always pur-

sued

sued by choice. In the mean time, however, I enjoy the pleasure of my friends jests, while some tell me I certainly foresaw this edict; and others, that it was particularily levelled against my avarice and rapine Farwell.

Epist. XV. PLINY to PONTIUS.

I Was at Comum when I heard that Cornutus Tertullus was appointed surveyor * of the Æmilian way. This news was inexpressibly agreeable to me, both upon his account and my own: upon his, because though ambition should be (as it certainly is) far removed from his heart, yet it cannot but be acceptable to him to receive so great an honour without seeking it; upon mine, because it heightens the satisfaction which results from my own office, to see a man of so distinguished a character as Cornutus raised to one of the same † nature; for to be placed in the

* This was an office of great dignity among the Romans, and usually conferred upon those who had been consuls. Thus Cæsar is mentioned by Plutarch as surveyor of the Appian way. These roads extended to a great distance from the city on all sides, the most noble of which was the Appian computed to reach three hundred and fifty miles. Mr Wright in his travels, speaking of this road, observes, that “though it be much broken in several places, and travelling over it very bad, in others it is wonderfully well preserved, notwithstanding it be computed near two thousand years old. They are paved with such hard stones, that they are rather polished than worn, and so well joined, that in some places the whole breadth of the way seems one entire piece.”

† It appears by some ancient inscriptions still remaining, that Pliny was surveyor of the river Tiber and its banks, to which office it is probable he here alludes.

same rank with the good, is a pleasure equal to being honoured with the highest dignities. And where indeed is the man who exceeds Cornutus in worth and virtue? or whose conduct is a more express model of ancient manners? In this I do not found my judgment upon fame, which however, with great justice, speaks of him in the highest terms; but upon long and frequent experience. We have ever been joined in the same friendships with the most shining characters in both sexes which this age has produced: an union that cemented us in the strictest intimacy. To these private ties were added those of a more public nature: he was, you know, my colleague in the treasury, as well as the consulship. These were opportunities of gaining a thorough knowledge of his uncommon virtues; when I followed him as a guide, and revered him as a parent; and that not so much upon account of his age, as his merit. I rejoice therefore no less for my own sake than his; and I do so upon a public as well as private consideration, since virtue is now no longer, as formerly, exposed to the most cruel dangers, but advanced to the noblest dignities. But if I were to indulge the joyous sentiments I feel upon this occasion, I should never have finished my letter. Let me turn then to an account of what I was doing when your messenger arrived. He found me with my wife's grandfather and aunt, together with several other friends, whose company I had not enjoyed for a considerable time: I was traversing my grounds, hearing the complaints of the farmers, running over their tedious accounts, and had before me papers and letters far different from those to which my inclination early devoted me: in a word, I was preparing to return to Rome. For I have obtained but a short leave of absence; and indeed the news of this office being conferred on Cornutus,

reminds

reminds me to haſten to the duties of my own. I hope your favourite Campania will reſign you about the ſame time, ſo that when I return to Rome, not a day may be loſt to our friendly intercourſe. Farewell.

Epiſt. XVI. PLINY to MARCELLINUS.

I Write this to you under the utmoſt oppreſſion of ſorrow : the youngeſt daughter of my friend Fundanus is dead ! Never ſurely was there a more agreeable and amiable young perſon, or one who better deſerved to have enjoyed a long, I had almoſt ſaid, an immortal life ! ſhe was ſcarce fourteen, and yet had all the wiſdom of age, and diſcretion of a matron, joined with youthful ſweetneſs and virgin modeſty. With what an engaging ſon inneſs did ſhe behave to her father ! how kindly and reſpectfully receive his friends ! how affectionately treat all thoſe who, in their reſpective offices, had the care and education of her ! ſhe employed much of her time in reading, in which ſhe diſcovered great ſtrength of judgment ; ſhe indulged herſelf in few diverſions, and thoſe with much caution. With what forbearance, with what patience, with what courage did ſhe endure her laſt illneſs ! She complied with all the directions of her phyſicians ; ſhe encouraged her ſiſter, and her father ; and when all her ſtrength of body was exhausted, ſupported herſelf by the ſingle vigour of her mind. That, indeed, continued even to her laſt moments, unbroken by the pain of a long illneſs, or the terrors of approaching death ; and it is a reflection which makes the loſs of her ſo much the more to be lamented. A loſs infinitely ſevere ! and more ſevere by the particular conjuncture in which it happened ! She was contracted to a moſt worthy youth ; the wedding day was fixed, and we were

all invited. How sad a change from the highest joy, to the deepest sorrow! how shall I express the wound that pierced my heart, when I heard Fundanus himself (as grief is ever finding out circumstances to aggravate its affliction) ordering the money he had designed to lay out upon cloaths and jewels for her marriage, to be employed in myrrh and spices for her funeral? He is a man of great learning and good sense, who has applied himself, from his earliest youth, to the nobler and most elevated studies; but all the maxims of fortitude which he has received from books, or advanced himself, he now absolutely rejects, and every other virtue of his heart gives place to all a parent's tenderness. You will excuse, you will even approve his sorrow, when you consider what he has lost. He has lost a daughter who resembled him in his manners, as well as his person, and exactly copied out all her father. If you shall think proper to write to him upon the subject of so reasonable a grief, let me remind you not to use the rougher arguments of consolation, and such as seem to carry a sort of reproof with them, but those of kind and sympathising humanity. Time will render him more open to the dictates of reason: for as a fresh wound shrinks back from the hand of the surgeon, but by degrees submits to, and even requires the means of its cure; so a mind under the first impressions of a misfortune shrinks and rejects all arguments of consolation, but at length, if applied with tenderness, calmly and willingly acquiesces in them. Farewell.

Epist. XVII. PLINY to SPURINNA.

KNowing, as I do, how much you admire the polite arts, and what satisfaction you take in seeing young men of quality pursue the steps

steps of their ancestors, I seize this earliest opportunity of informing you, that I went to-day to hear Calpurnius Piso read a poem he has composed upon a very bright and learned subject, entitled *the Constellations*. His numbers, which were elegiac, were soft, flowing, and easy, at the same time that they had all the subtilty suitable to such a noble topic. He varied his style from the lofty to the simple, from the close to the copious, from the grave to the florid, with equal genius and judgment. The embellishments were extremely heightened and recommended by a most harmonious voice ; which a very becoming modesty rendered still more pleasing. A confusion and concern in the countenance of a speaker throws a grace upon all he utters ; for there is a certain decent timidity which, I know not how, is infinitely more engaging than the assured and self-sufficient air of confidence. I might mention several other circumstances to his advantage, which I am the more inclined to take notice of, as they are most striking in a person of his age, and most uncommon in a youth of his quality : but not to enter into a farther detail of his merit, I will only tell you, that when he had finished his poem, I embraced him with the utmost complacency ; and being persuaded that nothing is a greater encouragement than applause, I exhorted him to persevere in the paths he had entered, and to shine out to posterity with the same glorious lustre, which reflected from his ancestors to himself. I congratulated his excellent mother, and his brother, who gained as much honour by the generous affection he discovered upon this occasion as Calpurnius did by his eloquence ; so remarkable a concern he showed for him when he began to recite his poem, and so much pleasure in his success. May the gods grant me frequent occasions of giving you accounts of this nature !

for I have a partiality to the age in which I live, and should rejoice to find it not barren of merit. To this end, I ardently wish our young men of quality would not derive all their glory from the images of their ancestors. As for those which are placed in the house of these excellent youths, I now figure them to myself as silently applauding and encouraging their pursuits, and (what is a sufficient degree of honour to them both) as owning and consenting them to be their kindred. Farewell.

Epist. XVIII. PLINY to MACER.

ALL is well with me, since it is so with you. You are happy, I find, in the company of your wife and son; and are enjoying the pleasures of the sea, the freshness of the fountains, the verdure of the fields, and the elegancies of a most agreeable villa: for so I judge it to be, since he who was most happy ere fortune had raised him to what is generally esteemed the highest point of human felicity, chose it for the place of his retirement. As for myself, I am employed at my Tuscan villa in hunting and studying, sometimes alternately, and sometimes both together; but I am not yet able to determine in which pursuit it is most difficult to succeed. Farewell.

Epist. XIX. PLINY to PAULINUS.

AS I know the humanity with which you treat your own servants, I do not scruple to confess to you the indulgence I shew to mine. I have ever in my mind Homer's character of Ulysses,

Who rul'd his people with a father's love:

And the very expression in our language for the head of a family, suggests the rule of one's conduct towards

towards it. But were I naturally of a rough and hardened cast of temper, the ill state of health of my freedman Zosimus (who has the stronger claim to a humane treatment at my hands, as he now stands much in need of it) would be sufficient to soften me. He is a person of great worth, diligent in his services, and well skilled in literature; but his chief talent, and indeed his profession, is that of a comedian, wherein he highly excels. He speaks with great emphasis, judgment, propriety, and gracefulness: he has a very good hand too upon the lyre, which he understands better than is necessary for one of his profession. To this I must add, he reads history, oratory, and poetry, as well as if he had singly applied himself to that art. I am the more particular in enumerating his qualifications, to let you see how many agreeable services I receive from him. He is indeed endeared to me by the ties of a long affection, which seems to be heightened by the danger he is now in. For nature has so formed our hearts, that nothing contributes more to raise and enflame our inclination for any enjoyment, than the apprehension of being deprived of it: a sentiment which Zosimus has given me occasion to experience more than once. Some years ago he strained himself so much by too vehement an exertion of his voice, that he spit blood, upon which account I sent him into Egypt; from whence, after a long absence, he lately returned with great benefit to his health. But having again exerted himself for several days together beyond his strength, he was reminded of his former malady by a slight return of his cough, and a spitting of blood. For this reason I intend to send him to your farm at Forum-Julii, having frequently heard you mention it as an exceeding fine air, and recommend the milk of that place as very good in disorders of this nature. I beg you

would give directions to your people to receive him into your house, and to supply him with what he shall have occasion for : which will not be much, for he is so temperate as not only to abstain from delicacies, but even to deny himself the necessaries his ill state of health requires. I shall furnish him towards his journey with what will be sufficient for one of his abstemious turn, who is coming under your roof. Farewell.

Epist. XX. PLINY to URSUS.

SOON after the Bithynians had gone through with their prosecution of Julius Bassus, they also impeached their late governor Rufus Varenus ; who was but just before (and that too at their own request) appointed counsel for them against Bassus. Being introduced into the senate, they petitioned, that an inquiry might be made into his conduct. Varenus, on the other hand, begged all proceedings might be stayed till he could send for the witnesses necessary to his defence ; but this being opposed by the Bithynians, that point was debated. I was counsel (and no unsuccessful one) for Varenus ; but whether a good one or not, you will judge when you read my speech. Fortune has a very considerable share in the event of every cause : the quickness, the voice, the manner of the advocate, even the circumstance of time itself ; in a word, the general disposition of the senate, as it is either favourable or adverse to the accused, all conspire to influence the success. But when a speech is read in the closet, it is stripped of all these external circumstances, and has nothing to fear or hope from favour or prejudice, from lucky or unlucky accidents. Fonteius Magius, one of the Bithynians, replied to me with great pomp of words, and little to the purpose : a character applicable to many

ny of the Greek orators, as well as to himself. They mistake volubility for copiousness, and thus overwhelm you with an endless torrent of cold and unaffecting periods. Julius Candidus used, not improperly, to say, that *eloquence is one thing, and loquacity another*. Eloquence indeed is the privilege of very few; nay, if we will believe Marcus Antonius, of none: but that faculty which Candidus calls loquacity, is common to numbers, and the talent which generally attends impudence. The next day Homulus spoke for Varenus with great art, strength, and elegance; to whom Nigrinus made a very close, solid, and graceful reply. It was the opinion of Acilius Rufus, the consul elect, that the Bithynians should be permitted to lodge their information; but he took no notice of the petition of Varenus; which was only another way of putting his negative upon it. Cornelius Priscus, formerly consul, declared that he thought the request of both parties should be granted: and his opinion prevailed. Thus we gained our point; and though we had not the authority either of law or usage on our side, yet certainly the thing we insisted upon was extremely equitable. But I will not in this place give you my reasons for thinking so, that you may with more impatience turn to my speech. For if it is true, as Homer sings, that

— *Novel lays attract our ravisht ears;
But old, the mind with inattention hears:*

I must not suffer the intemperate loquacity of my letter to despoil my speech of its principal flower, by robbing it of that novelty which is indeed its chief recommendation. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XXI. PLINY to RUFUS.

I Went into the Julian court to attend a cause in which at the next sitting I was to reply. The judges had taken their seats, the decemviri were arrived, the eyes of the audience were fixed upon the counsel, and all was hushed in silence and expectation, when an order arrived from the prætor, that the court should be adjourned: an accident extremely agreeable to me, who am never so well prepared, but that I am glad of gaining farther time. The occasion of the court's rising thus abruptly, was an edict of Nepos, the prætor for criminal causes, wherein he directed all persons concerned as plaintiffs or defendants in any cause before him, to take notice, that he designed strictly to put in force the decree of the senate annexed to his edict. Which decree was expressed in the following words: ALL PERSONS WHATSOEVER, WHO HAVE ANY LAW-SUITS DEPENDING, ARE HEREBY REQUIRED AND COMMANDED, BEFORE ANY PROCEEDINGS BE HAD THEREON, TO TAKE AN OATH THAT THEY HAVE NOT GIVEN, PROMISED, OR ENGAGED TO GIVE ANY FEE OR REWARD TO ANY ADVOCATE UPON ACCOUNT OF HIS UNDERTAKING THEIR CAUSE. In these terms, and many others equally full and express, the lawyers were prohibited to make their profession venal. However, after the cause is decided, they are permitted to accept a gratuity of ten thousand sesterces. The prætor for civil causes being alarmed at this unexpected order of Nepos, gave us this holyday in order to take time to consider whether he should follow the example. In the mean while the town is much divided in its sentiments of this edict, some extremely approving, and others as much condemning it.

We have got then at last (say the latter with a sneer) a redressor of abuses. But pray was there never a prætor before this man? what then is he who thus forwardly sets up for a reformer? Others, on the contrary, say, that he has taken a very proper step upon entering into his office; that he has paid obedience to the laws; considered the decrees of the senate, repressed a most indecent traffic, and will not suffer the most honourable of all professions to be debased into a sordid commerce of lucre. These are the reflections which are universally thrown out upon this occasion; but which side shall be thought to judge most rightly, the event alone will determine. It is the usual method of the world, (though a very unquitable rule of estimation, to pronounce an action to be either right or wrong, as it is attended with good or ill success; in consequence of which you shall hear the very same conduct attributed to zeal or folly, to liberty or licentiousness. Farewell.

B O O K VI.

Epist. I. PLINY to TYRO.



I Was less sensible of your absence, while you were in the country of the Piceni, and I on the other side the Po, than I find myself now that I am returned to Rome. Whether it be that the scene where we used to associate, naturally excites a more passionate remembrance of you; or that the less distant we are from a friend, the more impatient we grow under the separation, (our desires for a favourite object rising in proportion to our nearer approach towards it), I know not. But upon whatever principle this difference is to be accounted for, remove the uneasiness

finess of it, I entreat you, by hastening hither: otherwise I shall return again into the country (which I now regret having left so soon), were it only to make the experiment whether, when you shall not find me at Rome, you will send the same friendly complaints after me. Farewell.

Epist. II. PLINY TO ARRIANUS.

I Will not say I regret the loss of Regulus. but I confess, I sometimes miss him at the bar. The man, it must be owned, highly honoured eloquence, and was laboriously solicitous in his endeavours to attain it. Though he could never indeed leave off the ridiculous custom of anointing his right or left eye, and wearing a white patch over one side or the other of his forehead, as he was to plead either for the plaintiff or defendant; though he always, with a most foolish superstition, consulted the soothsayers upon the event of every cause in which he was concerned; still, all the absurdity proceeded from that high veneration he paid to eloquence. And it was of singular advantage to be concerned in the same cause with him, as he always obtained full indulgence in point of time, and never failed to procure an audience; for what could be more convenient than, under the protection of a liberty which you did not ask yourself, and before an audience which you had not the trouble of collecting, to harangue at your ease, and as long as you thought proper? Nevertheless Regulus did well to depart this life, though indeed he would have done much better had he made his exit sooner; since he might now have lived without any danger to the public, in the reign of a prince under whom he would have had no opportunity of compassing his pernicious purposes. I need not scruple therefore, I think, to say I sometimes
miss

miss him : for, since his death, the custom has prevailed of not allowing, nor indeed of asking more than an hour or two to plead in, and sometimes not above half that time. The truth is, our advocates take more pleasure in finishing a cause, than in defending it ; and our judges had rather rise from the bench than sit upon it : such is their indolence, and such their disregard to the honour of eloquence and the interest of justice ! But are we wiser than our ancestors ? are we more equitable than the laws, which grant so many hours, and days, and adjournments to a cause ? were our forefathers slow of apprehension, and dull beyond measure ? and are we more clear in our eloquence, more quick in our conceptions, or more scrupulous in our decisions, because we hurry over our causes in fewer hours than they took days to consider of them ? What a reproach is it, Regulus, that none could refuse to thy vain-glorious solicitations, what few will yield even to the duty of their office ! As for myself, whenever I sit upon the bench, (which is much oftener than I appear at the bar), I always give the advocates as much time as they require : for I look upon it as highly presuming, to pretend to guess before a cause is heard, what time it will require, and to set limits to an affair before one is acquainted with its extent ; especially as the first and most sacred duty of a judge is patience, which indeed is itself a very considerable part of justice. But this, it is objected, would give an opening to much impertinent superfluity : I grant it may ; yet is it not better to hear too much, than not to hear enough ? Besides, how shall you know that what an advocate has farther to offer will be superfluous, till you have heard him ? But this, and many other public abuses, will be best reserved to a conversation when we meet ; for I know your affection to the commonwealth inclines you to wish, that
some

some means might be found out to check at least those grievances, which would now be very difficult absolutely to remove. — But to turn to affairs of private concern: I hope all goes well in your family; mine remains in its usual situation. The good which I enjoy grows more acceptable to me by its continuance; as habit renders me less sensible of the evils I suffer. Farewell.

Epist. III. PLINY to VERUS.

I Return you thanks, that you have undertaken to improve that little farm I gave to my nurse. It was worth, when I made her a present of it, an hundred thousand sesterces, but the crops having since failed, it has sunk in its value: however, it will thrive again, I doubt not, under your good management. But what I recommend to your attention, is not so much the land itself, (which yet I by no means except), as the interest of my particular benefaction; for it is not more her concern than mine, to render it as advantageous as possible. Farewell.

Epist. IV. PLINY to CALPURNIA *.

Business was never more disagreeable to me, than when it prevented me not only from attending, but following you into † Campania. As at all times, so particularly now, I wish to be with you, that I may be a witness what progress

* His wife.

† Where Fabatus, Calphurnia's grandfather, had a villa. This delightful country is celebrated by almost every classic author, and every modern traveller, for the fertility of its soil, the beauty of its landscape, and temperature of its air. *Nil mollius cælo*, says Florus, *nil uberius solo; denique his floribus vernat.* l. i. 16.

you make in your strength and recovery, and how the tranquillity, the amusements, and plenty of that charming country agree with you. Were you in perfect health, yet I could ill support your absence; for even a moment's uncertainty of the welfare of those we tenderly love, is a situation of mind infinitely painful: but now your sickness conspires with your absence to perplex me with a thousand disquietudes. I fear every thing that can befall you, and, as is usual with all under the same terrifying apprehension, suspect most, what I most dread. Let me conjure you then to prevent my solicitude by writing to me every day, and even twice a-day: I shall be more easy, at least while I am reading your letters; though all my apprehensions will again return upon me the moment I have perused them. Farewell.

Epist. V. PLINY to URBUS.

I Informed you before before *, that Varenus obtained leave of the senate to send for his witnesses. This was thought by many extremely equitable, though some others, with much obstinacy, maintained the contrary; particularly Licinius Nepos, who at the following assembly of the senate, when the house was going upon other business, returned this affair which had been settled, and made a long speech upon the last decree. And he concluded with moving, that the consul's might be desired to put the question, whether it was the sense of the senate, that as in prosecutions upon the law concerning bribery and corruption, so in that relating to extortion, a clause should be added empowering the defendant, as well as the informer, to summon and examine witnesses. This speech was

* Book 5. let. 20.

looked upon by some as extremely ill-timed: they thought it strange that Nepos should let slip the proper occasion of observing upon the decree, when it was under the consideration of the senate; and object to an affair after it was determined, which he might have obviated while it was in debate. Jubaentius Celsus, the prætor, very warmly reproved him in a long speech, for pretending to set himself up as reformer of the senate. Nepos answered him; Celsus replied, and neither of them were sparing of reflections on each other. — But I forbear to repeat what I could not hear without regret; and am therefore so much the more displeased with some members of the senate, who ran from Nepos to Celsus, as one or the other was speaking, with the low pleasure of listening to their mutual invectives; sometimes encouraging one, sometimes the other, and sometimes both; seem'd at least towards seeming to reconcile them, and then again animating them to the attack, as if they had been at some public combat. And I could not observe without great concern, that they were mutually instructed with what each other intended to allege; for Celsus replied to Nepos, as Nepos did to Celsus, out of a paper which each held in their hands. This was occasioned by the indiscretion of their friends, and thus these two men abused one another as if they had previously agreed to quarrel. Farewell.

Epist. VI. PLINY to FUNDANUS.

I Was never more desirous to see you in Rome than at present, and I entreat you therefore to come hither: for I want a friend to share with me in the labour and solicitude of an affair, in which I very warmly interest myself. Julius Naso is a candidate for a post of honour: he

has many competitors, and some of them of great worth; upon which account, as his success will be more glorious, so it will be more difficult. I am much divided between hope and fear; and the anxiety I feel upon this occasion is so great, that I almost forget I have been consul, and fancy I have the whole field of dignities to run over again. This zeal is justly due to Nais, in return for his long affection to me. The friendship which I have for him did not, it is true, defend to him by intercession, for his father and I were at too great a distance in point of age to admit of any intimacy between us; yet from my earliest youth I was taught to look upon him with the highest veneration. He was not only an admirer of the polite arts himself, but the patron of all who cultivated them; as he was a frequent attender of Quintilian and Nicetes, to whom I was at that time a disciple. He was, in short, a man of great worth and eminence, and one whose memory ought extremely to facilitate the honours of his son. But there are numbers in the senate who never knew his father; and though there are many also who were well acquainted with him, yet they are such whose regards extend not beyond the living. For this reason Nepos, without relying upon the character of his father, which is likely to prove of more honour than service to him, must exert the utmost of his own endeavours to recommend himself: and indeed, he has ever been as cautious in his conduct as if he had governed it with a particular view to this occasion. He has acquired many friendships, and cultivated them with strict fidelity, and particularly singled me out for the object of his esteem and imitation, from the first moment he was capable of forming any judgment of the world. Whenever I plead, he anxiously attends me, and is always of the party

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when

when I recite ; as he is ever the first to inquire after my works. His brother had the same attachment to me. — But he has lost that excellent brother ! and it shall be my part to supply his place. It is with grief I reflect upon the immature death of the one, as I lament that the other should be deprived of the assistance of so valuable a relation, and left only to the zeal of his friends. It is that consideration which induces me to hope you would come hither and unite your testimony with mine. It will be of singular advantage to the cause in which I am embarked, if you would appear in it, and join your solicitations with mine ; and such, I know, is your credit and influence, that I am persuaded your doing so will render my applications more effectual, even with my own friends themselves. Let me entreat you then to break through all obstacles that may lie in your way. I have a right to claim your assistance in this conjuncture : your friendship to me, and my credit both require it. I have undertaken to support the interest of Naso, and the world knows that I do ; the pursuit and the hazard therefore is become my own. In a word, if he obtains this post, all the honour will be his ; but if he be rejected, the repulse will be mine. Farewell.

Epist. VII. PLINY to CALPURNIA.

YOU write me, how much you are affected by my absence, and that your only consolation is in conversing with my works, instead of their author, which you frequently place by your side. How agreeable is it to me to know that you thus wish for my company, and support yourself under the want of it by these tender amusements ! In return, I entertain myself with reading over your letters again and again, and

and am continually taking them up as if I had just received them; but alas! they only serve to make me more strongly regret your absence: for how amiable must her conversation be, whose letters have so many charms? Let me receive them, however, as often as possible, notwithstanding there is still a mixture of pain in the pleasure they afford me. Farewell.

Epist. VIII. PLINY to PRISCUS.

YOU have long known, and you esteem Attilius Crescens; as indeed who is there of any rank or worth that does not? For myself, I profess to have a friendship for him much superior to the common attachments of the world. The places of our nativity are separated only by a day's journey; and we conceived an affection to each other when we were very young; a season when friendship strikes the deepest root. Ours improved by years; and so far from being weakened, that it was confirmed by our ripper judgments, as those who know us best can witness. He takes pleasure in boasting every where of my friendship; as I do to let the world know, that his honour, his ease, and his interest are my peculiar concern. Insomuch that upon his expressing to me some apprehension from the influence of a certain person who was entering upon the tribuneship of the people, I could not forbear answering,

*Long as Achilles breathes this vital air,
To touch thy head no impious hand shall dare *.*

I mention this to shew you that I look upon every injury offered to Attilius, as done to myself. But you will be impatient to hear what all

* Hom. Il. lib. 1. ver. 38.

this tends to. You must know then, Valerius Varus, at his death, owed Attilius a sum of money. Though I am acquainted with Maximus, his heir, yet there is a closer friendship between him and you. I beg therefore, and conjure you by the affection you have for me, to take care that Attilius is not only paid the principal which is due to him, but all the long arrears of interest. He neither covets the property of others, nor neglects the care of his own; and as he is not engaged in any lucrative profession, he has nothing to depend upon but his frugality: for as to the polite arts, in which he greatly excels, he pursues them merely upon the motives of pleasure and fame. In such a situation, the slightest loss presses hard upon a man, and the more so because he has no opportunities of repairing any injury done to his fortune. Assist us then, I entreat you, in this difficulty, and suffer me still to enjoy the pleasure of his sprightly and diverting conversation; for I cannot bear to see the cheerfulness of my friend overclouded, whose mirth and good humour dissipates every gloom of melancholy in myself. In a word, as you are well acquainted with the entertaining gaiety of temper which Attilius possesses, I hope you will not suffer any injury to discompose and sour it. You may judge by the warmth of his affection, how bitter his resentments would prove; for a generous and great mind can ill brook an injury when it is joined with contempt. But though he could pass it over, yet cannot I: on the contrary, I shall look upon it as a wrong and indignity done to myself, and resent it as one offered to my friend; that is, with double warmth. But after all, why this air of threatening? rather let me end in the same style I began, by earnestly conjuring you so to act in this affair, that neither Attilius may have reason to imagine (which I should greatly regret)

that

that I neglect his interest; nor that I may have occasion to charge you of being careless of mine: as undoubtedly I shall not, if you have the same regard for the latter, as I have for the former. Farewell.

Epist. IX. PLINY to TACITUS.

WHen you recommend to my care Julius Natio in the office he is pursuing, what is it but recommending me to myself? However, I forgive you, and I should have done the same had you been at Rome, and I absent. The tender anxiety of friendship is apt to imagine every circumstance to be material. But I advise you to turn your solicitations to others, and be assured I will take a full share with you in all your applications in this affair, and support you with my best and warmest endeavours. Farewell.

Epist. X. PLINY to ALBINUS.

WHen I came to the country-house of my mother-in-law, in the Albian territories, which once belonged to Verginius Rufus, the place renewed in my mind the sorrowful remembrance of that great and excellent man. He was extremely fond of this retirement, and used to call it *the nest of his old age*; where-ever I turned my eyes, I missed my worthy friend. I had an inclination to visit his monument; but I repented of my curiosity; for I found it still unfinished, and this, not from any difficulty of the work itself, for it is very plain, or rather indeed slight; but through the neglect of him to whose care it was intrusted. I could not see without a concern mixed with indignation, the remains of a man, whose fame filled the whole world, lie for ten years after his death without an inscription, or a name.

name. He had however directed, that the divine and immortal action of his life should be recorded upon his tomb in the following lines :

*Here Rufus lies, who Vindex' arms withstood,
Not for himself, but for his country's good.*

But a faithful friend is so rare to be found, and the dead are so soon forgotten, that we shall be obliged to build even our very monuments, and anticipate the office of our heirs. For who is it that has not reason to fear what has happened to Verginius, may be his own case ? an indignity which is so much the more remarkable and injurious, as it falls upon one of his distinguished virtues.

Epist. XI. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

O Happy day ! having been called by the præfect of the city, to his assistance in a certain cause, I had the pleasure to hear two excellent young men, Fuscus Salinator and Numidius Quadratus, plead on the opposite sides : both of them of extraordinary hopes and great talents, who will one day, I am persuaded, prove an ornament not only to the present age, but to literature itself. They discovered upon this occasion an admirable probity, supported by inflexible courage : their habit was decent, their elocution distinct, their voice manly, their memory strong *,
their

* Strength of memory seems to have been a quality highly esteemed among the Romans, Pliny often mentioning it when he draws the characters of his friends, as in the number of their most shining talents. And Quintilian considers it as the measure of genius ; *tantum ingenii, say he, quantum memorie*. The extraordinary

their genius elevated, and guided by an equal solidity of judgment. I took infinite pleasure in observing them display these noble qualities; particularly as I had the satisfaction to see that while they looked upon me as their guide and model, they appeared in the sentiments of the audience as my imitators and rivals. It was a day (I cannot but repeat it again) which afforded me the most exquisite happiness, and which I shall ever distinguish with the fairest mark. For what in-

extraordinary perfection in which some of the ancients are said to have possessed this useful faculty, is almost incredible. Our author speaks in a former letter, of a Greek philosopher of his acquaintance, who, after having delivered a long harangue extempore, would immediately repeat it again, without losing a single word. Seneca says, he could in his youth repeat two thousand names exactly in the same order they were read to him; and that to try the strength of his memory, the audience who attended the same professor with himself, would each of them give him a verse, which he would instantly repeat, beginning with the last, and so on to the first, to the amount of two hundred. He tells a pleasant story upon this occasion, of a certain poet, who having recited a poem in public, a person who was present claimed it for his own, and in proof of its being so, repeated it word for word; which the real author was not capable of doing. [Sen. controv. l. 1. sub init.]. Numberless instances might be collected from the ancients, to the same purpose; to mention only a few more: it is said of Themistocles, that he made himself master of the Persian language in a year's time; of Mithridates, that he understood as many languages as he commanded nations, that is, no less than twenty-two; of Cyrus, that he retained the names of every single soldier in his army. [Quint. l. 11. 2]. But the finest compliment that ever was paid to a good memory, is what Tully says of Julius Cæsar, in his oration for Ligarius, *that he never forgot any thing but an injury.*

deed could be either more pleasing to me on the public account, than to observe two such noble youths building their fame and glory upon the polite arts; or more desirable upon my own, than to be marked out as a worthy example to them in their pursuits of virtue? May heaven still grant me the continuance of that pleasure! and you will bear me witness, I sincerely implore the gods, that every man who thinks me deserving of his imitation, may far exceed the model he has chosen. Farewell.

Epist. XII. PLINY to FABATUS.*

INdeed you ought not to make the least scruple of recommending to me such persons as you judge worthy your patronage, because nothing is more agreeable to your character than to be as extensively beneficent as possible; nor to mine, than to interest myself in every thing in which you are concerned. Be assured therefore I shall give all the assistance in my power to Vettius Priscus, especially in what relates to my peculiar province; I mean the bar—

You desire me to forget those letters which you wrote to me, you say, in the openness of your heart; but believe me, there is none I remember with more complacency. They are very pleasing proofs of the share I enjoy of your affection, since you use the same free expostulations with me, that you would with your own son. And, to confess the truth, they are so much the more agreeable, as I had nothing to accuse myself of upon your account; for I had very exactly performed your requests. I entreat you again and again, still to rebuke me with the same freedom, whenever you imagine (and I trust it will be only imagination) that I fail in my duty towards you: it will afford

* His wife Calphurnia's grandfather.

me the pleasure of receiving a strong mark of your affection ; and you that of being convinced I did not deserve the reproach. Farewell.

Epist. XIII. PLINY to URSUS.

HAVE you ever seen a man so harassed and persecuted as my friend Varenus ? He has been obliged to enter into a fresh defence, and, as it were, to petition again for what he had, with much struggle and difficulty, already obtained *. The Bithynians have had the confidence not only to complain to the consuls of the decree of the senate ; but also to inveigh against it to the emperor, who happened to be absent when it passed. Cæsar referred them back to the senate, where they still persisted in their remonstrances. Claudius Capito ventured to be counsel for them, and I will add, with more ill-manners than true fortitude, as it was to arraign the justice of a decree of the senate, in the face of that august assembly. Fronto Catus replied to him with great solidity and spirit ; as indeed the whole body of the senate conducted themselves in this affair with wonderful dignity. For those who opposed the petition of Varenus, when it was first brought before the house, thought, after it was granted, it ought not to be reversed. While the question indeed was under debate, every body, they imagined, was at liberty to give their sentiments ; but when once settled by the majority, they looked upon it then to be the common concern of each member to support it. This was the general opinion of the whole house, Acilius Rufus only excepted, and seven or eight more with him : these indeed persevered in their former vote. Among which small party there were some whose occasional solemnity, or rather affectation of so-

* See b. 5. let. 20.

lemnity, was extremely ridiculed. You will judge from hence what a warm battle we are likely to have of it, since this prelude, as I may call it, has occasioned so much contention. Farewell.

Epist. XIV. PLINY to MAURICUS.

YOU invite me to Formianum. I will come, upon this condition only, that you put yourself to no inconvenience upon my account; a condition which I shall also strictly observe on my part. It is not the pleasures of your sea and your coast that I pursue; it is your company, together with ease and freedom from business, that I desire to enjoy; otherwise I might as well remain in Rome: for there is no medium worth accepting between giving up your time wholly to the disposal of others, or reserving it entirely in your own; at least for myself, I declare I cannot relish mixtures of any kind. Farewell.

Epist. XV. PLINY to ROMANUS.

YOU were not present at a very extraordinary occurrence which lately happened: nor was I a witness to it either, but I had an early account of it. Passienus Paulus an eminent Roman knight, and particularly conspicuous for his great learning, has a turn for elegiac poetry; a talent which runs in the family, for Propertius was his relation, as well as his countryman. He was lately reciting a poem which began thus:

Priscus, at thy command —

Whereupon Priscus, who happened to be present as a particular friend of the poet's, cried out—
But he is mistaken, I did not command him. Think what a peal of laughter this occasioned. The intellects

telleſts of Prifcus, you muſt know, are ſomething ſuſpicious ; however, as he enters into the common offices of life, is called to conſultations, and publicly acts as a lawyer, this behaviour was the more remarkable and ridiculous : and in truth Paulus was a good deal diſconcerted by his friend's abſurdity. Thus you ſee, it is not only neceſſary that an author who recites his works in public, ſhould himſelf have a ſound judgment, but that he takes care his audience have ſo too. Farewell.

Epist. XVI. PLINY to TACITUS.

YOU deſire that I ſhould write you an account of my uncle's death, that you may be enabled to tranſmit a more exact relation of it to poſterity. I return you thanks. For I foreſee that if this accident ſhall be celebrated by your pen, the glory of it will be rendered for ever illuſtrious. And notwithstanding he periſhed by a miſfortune, which, as it involved at the ſame time a moſt beautiful country in ruins, and deſtroyed ſo many populous cities, ſeems to promiſe him an ever-laſting remembrance ; notwithstanding he has himſelf compoſed many and laſting works ; yet I am perſuaded, the mentioning of him in your immortal writings, will greatly contribute to eternize his name. Happy I eſteem thoſe to be, whom providence has diſtinguiſhed with the abilities either of doing ſuch actions as are worthy of being related, or of relating them in a manner worthy of being read ; but doubly happy are they who are bleſſed with both theſe uncommon talents : in the number of which my uncle, as his own writings, and your hiſtory will evidently prove, may juſtly be ranked. It is with extreme willingneſs, therefore, I execute your commands ; and ſhould indeed have claimed the taſk if you had not enjoined it. He was at that time with the

fleet under his command at * Misenum. On the 24th of August, about one in the afternoon, my mother desired him to observe a cloud which appeared of a very unusual size and shape. He had just returned from taking the benefit of the sun, and after bathing himself in cold water, and taking a slight repast, was retired to his study : he immediately arose, and went out upon an eminence from whence he might more distinctly view this very uncommon appearance. It was not at that distance discernible from what mountain this cloud issued, but it was found afterwards to ascend from mount Vesuvius †. I cannot give you a more exact description of its figure, than by resembling it to that of a pine-tree, for it shot up a great height in the form of a trunk, which extended itself at the top into a sort of branches ;

* In the gulf of Naples.

† About six miles distant from Naples. — This dreadful eruption happened A. D. 79, in the first year of the emperor Titus. Martial has a pretty epigram upon this subject, in which he gives us a view of Vesuvius, as it appeared before this terrible conflagration broke out :

*Here verdant vines o'erspread Vesuvius's sides ;
The gen'rous grape here pour'd her purple tides.
This Bacchus lov'd beyond his native scene ;
Here dancing satyrs joy'd to trip the green.
Far more than Sparta this in Venus' grace ;
And great Alcides once renown'd the place :
Now flaming embers spread dire waste around,
And gods regret that gods can thus confound.*

Lib. 4. ep. 44.

It seems probable that this was the first eruption of mount Vesuvius, at least of any consequence ; as it is certain we have no particular accounts of any preceding one. Dio, indeed, and other ancient authors speak of it as burning before ; but still they describe it as covered with trees and vines, so that the eruptions must have been inconsiderable.

occasioned,

occasioned, I imagine, either by a sudden gust of air that impelled it, the force of which decreased as it advanced upwards, or the cloud itself being pressed back again by its own weight, expanded in this manner: it appeared sometimes bright and sometimes dark and spotted, as it was either more or less impregnated with earth and cinders. This extraordinary phenomenon excited my uncle's philosophical curiosity to take a nearer view of it. He ordered a light vessel to be got ready, and gave me the liberty, if I thought proper, to attend him. I rather chose to continue my studies; for, as it happened, he had given me an employment of that kind. As he was coming out of the house, he received a note from Rectina the wife of Bassus, who was in the utmost alarm at the imminent danger which threatened her; for her villa being situated at the foot of mount Vesuvius, there was no way to escape but by sea: she earnestly entreated him therefore to come to her assistance. He accordingly changed his first design, and what he began with a philosophical, he pursued with an heroical turn of mind. He ordered the galleys to put to sea, and went himself on board with an intention of assisting not only Rectina, but several others; for the villas stood extremely thick upon that beautiful coast. When hastening to the place from whence others fled with the utmost terror, he steered his direct course to the point of danger, and with so much calmness and presence of mind, as to be able to make and dictate his observations upon the motion and figure of that dreadful scene. He was now so nigh the mountain, that the cinders, which grew thicker and hotter the nearer he approached, fell into the ships, together with pumice-stones, and black pieces of burning rock: they were likewise in danger not only of being aground by the sudden retreat of the sea, but also

from the vast fragments which rolled down from the mountain, and obstructed all the shore. Here he stopped to consider whether he should return back again ; to which the pilot advising him, *Fortune*, said he, *befriends the brave ; carry me to Pomponianus*. Pomponianus was then at Stabiae, separated by a gulf, which the sea, after several insensible windings, forms upon the shore. He had already sent his baggage on board ; for though he was not at that time in actual danger, yet being within the view of it, and indeed extremely near, if it should in the least increase, he was determined to put to sea as soon as the wind should change. It was favourable, however, for carrying my uncle to Pomponianus, whom he found in the greatest consternation : he embraced him with tenderness, encouraging and exhorting him to keep up his spirits, and the more to dissipate his tears, he ordered, with an air of unconcern, the baths to be got ready ; when, after having bathed, he sat down to supper with great cheerfulness, or at least (what is equally heroic) with all the appearance of it. In the mean while the eruption from mount Vesuvius flamed out in several places with much violence, which the darkness of the night contributed to render still more visible and dreadful. But my uncle, in order to sooth the apprehensions of his friend, assured him it was only the burning of the villages, which the country-people had abandoned to the flames : after this he retired to rest, and it is most certain he was so little discomposed as to fall into a deep sleep ; for being pretty fat, and breathing hard, those who attended without actually heard him snore. The court which led to his apartment being now almost filled with stones and ashes, if he had continued there any time longer, it would have been impossible for him to have made his way out ; it

was thought proper therefore to awaken him. He got up, and went to Pomponianus and the rest of his company, who were not unconcerned enough to think of going to bed. They consulted together whether it would be most prudent to trust to the houses, which now shook from side to side with frequent and violent concussions; or fly to the open fields, where the calcined stones and cinders, though light indeed, yet fell in large showers, and threatened destruction. In this distress they resolved for the fields, as the less dangerous situation of the two: a resolution which, while the rest of the company were hurried into by their fears, my uncle embraced upon cool and deliberate consideration. They went out then, having pillows tied upon their heads with napkins; and this was their whole defence against the storm of stones that fell round them. It was now day every where else, but there a deeper darkness prevailed than in the most obscure night; which however was in some degree dissipated by torches and other lights of various kinds. They thought proper to go down further upon the shore to observe if they might safely put out to sea, but they found the waves still run extremely high and boisterous. There my uncle having drank a draught or two of cold water, threw himself down upon a cloth which was spread for him, when immediately the flames, and a strong smell of sulphur, which was the forerunner of them, dispersed the rest of the company, and obliged him to rise. He raised himself up with the assistance of two of his servants, and instantly fell down dead; suffocated, as I conjecture, by some gross and noxious vapour, having always had weak lungs, and frequently subject to a difficulty of breathing. As soon as it was light again, which was not till the third day after this melancholy accident, his body was found entire, and

without any marks of violence upon it, exactly in the same posture that he fell, and looking more like a man asleep than dead. During all this time my mother and I who were at Miseum — * But as this has no connection with your history, so your inquiry went no farther than concerning my uncle's death; with that therefore I will put an end to my letter: suffer me only to add, that I have faithfully related to you what I was either an eye-witness of myself, or received immediately after the accident happened, and before there was time to vary the truth. You will chuse out of this narrative such circumstances as shall be most suitable to your purpose: for there is a great difference between what is proper for a letter, and an history; between writing to a friend, and writing to the public. Farewell.

Epist. XVII. PLINY to RESTITUTUS.

I Am not able to restrain the indignation I conceived, while I attended a friend of mine at his rehearsal; but must give vent to it in a letter, since I have no opportunity of doing so in person. The company was entertained with the recital of a very finished performance: but there were two or three persons among the audience, men of great genius in their own, and a few of their friends estimation, who sat like so many mutes, without so much as moving a lip or a hand, or once rising from their seats, even to shift their posture. But to what purpose, in the name of good sense, all this wondrous air of wisdom and solemnity, or rather indeed (to give it its true appellation) of this proud indolence? Is it not downright folly, or even madness, thus to be at the expense of a whole day merely to commit a

* See this account continued, let. 20. of this book.
piece

piece of rudeness, and leave him an enemy, whom you visited as a friend? Is a man conscious that he possesses a superior degree of eloquence than the person whom he attends upon on such an occasion? so much the rather ought he to guard against every appearance of envy, as a passion that always implies inferiority, where-ever it resides. But whatever a man's talent may be, whether greater or equal, or less than his friend's, still it is his interest to give him the approbation he deserves: if greater or equal; because the higher his glory rises whom you equal or excel, the more considerable yours must necessarily be: if less; because if one of more exalted abilities does not meet with applause, neither possibly can you. For my own part, I honour and revere all who discover any degree of merit in the painful and laborious art of oratory; for Eloquence is a high and haughty dame, who scorns to reside with those that despise her. But perhaps you are not of this opinion: yet who has a greater regard for this glorious science, or is a more candid judge of it than yourself? in confidence of which, I chose to vent my indignation particularly to you, as not doubting you would be the first to share with me in the same sentiments. Farewell.

Epist. XVIII. PLINY to SABINUS.

YOU desire me to undertake the public cause of the Firmiani. I will endeavour to do so, though I have many affairs upon my hands: for I should be extremely glad to oblige so illustrious a colony by my good offices, as well as to render you an acceptable service. How indeed can I refuse you any thing, who profess to have sought my friendship as your ornament and support, especially when your request is on
behalf

behalf of your country? For what can be more worthy than the entreaties of a patriot, or more powerful than those of a friend? You may engage for me therefore to your, or rather as I should now call them, our friends the Firmiani. And though their own illustrious character did not persuade me that they deserve my care and patronage; yet I could not but conceive a very high notion of their merit, from seeing a man of your distinguished virtues rise up amongst them.

Epist. XIX. PLINY to NEPOS.

I Have you been informed that the price of lands is considerably risen, especially of those near Rome? This sudden advance was occasioned by a practice which has been much complained of, and which drew from the senate, at the last assembly for the election of magistrates, a very honourable decree, whereby the candidates for any office are prohibited from giving any treat, present, or money whatsoever. The two former of these abuses were practised with as little reserve as discretion; the latter, though carried on with more secrecy, was however equally notorious. Our friend Pomulus, taking advantage of this favourable disposition of the senate, instead of giving his sentiments upon the point in debate, moved that the consuls might acquaint the emperor, it was unanimously desired to have this abuse reformed, and that they would address him to interpose his vigilance and authority for the redress of this evil, as he had for that of every other. The emperor was accordingly pleased to do so, and published an edict to restrain these infamous largesses; wherein he directs that no person shall be admitted as a candidate, who has not a third part of his estate in land; esteeming it highly indecent, (as no doubt it is), that those
who

who aspire to dignities in the state, should look upon Rome and Italy, rather like travellers who are passing through it, than as their proper country. For this reason there is a general struggle among those who aim at any office, and they buy up every thing which they hear is to be sold; by which means the value of lands is greatly increased. If therefore you are inclined to dispose of any part of your estate here, or of making purchases elsewhere, you have now a good opportunity; for in order to buy in Italy, these candidates are obliged to sell their estates in the provinces. Farewell.

Epist. XX. PLINY TO CORNELIUS TACITUS.

YOU tell me, that the letter which, in compliance with your request, I wrote to you concerning the death of my uncle, has made you inquisitive to know not only what terrors, but what dangers I underwent while I continued at Misenum; for there, I think, the account in my former broke off:

Though my shock'd soul recoils, my tongue shall tell.

My uncle having left us, I pursued the studies which prevented my going with him, till it was time to bathe. After which I went to supper, and from thence to bed, where my sleep was greatly broken and disturbed. There had been for many days before some shocks of an earthquake, which the less surpris'd us as they are extremely frequent in Campania; but they were so particularly violent that night, that they not only shook every thing about us, but seem'd indeed to threaten total destruction. My mother flew to my chamber, where she found me rising, in order to awaken her. We went out into a small court belonging to the house, which
separated

separated the sea from the buildings. As I was at that time but eighteen years of age, I know not whether I should call my behaviour in this dangerous juncture, courage or rashness; but I took up Livy, and amused myself with turning over that author, and even making extracts from him, as if all about me had been in full security. While we were in this posture, a friend of my uncle's, who was just come from Spain to pay him a visit, joined us, and observing me sitting by my mother with a book in my hand, greatly condemned her calmness, at the same time that he reproved me for my careless security: nevertheless I still went on with my author. Though it was now morning, the light was exceedingly faint and languid; the buildings all around us tottered, and though we stood upon open ground, yet as the place was narrow and confined, there was no remaining there without certain and great danger: we therefore resolved to quit the town. The people followed us in the utmost consternation, and (as to a mind distracted with terror, every suggestion seems more prudent than its own) pressed in great crouds about us in our way out. Being got at a convenient distance from the houses, we stood still, in the midst of a most dangerous and dreadful scene. The chariots which we had ordered to be drawn out, were so agitated backwards and forwards, though upon the most level ground, that we could not keep them steady, even by supporting them with large stones. The sea seemed to roll back upon itself, and to be driven from its banks by the convulsive motion of the earth; it is certain at least the shore was considerably enlarged, and several sea-animals were left upon it. On the other side, a black and dreadful cloud bursting with an igneous serpentine vapour, darted out a long train of fire, resembling flashes of lightning.

lightning, but much larger. Upon this our Spanish friend, whom I mentioned above, addressing himself to my mother and me with greater warmth and earnestness: *If your brother and your uncle, said he, is safe, he certainly wishes you may be so too; but if he perished, it was his desire, no doubt, that you might both survive him: Why therefore do you delay your escape a moment?* We could never think of our own safety, we said, while we were uncertain of his. Hereupon our friend left us, and withdrew from the danger with the utmost precipitation. Soon afterwards, the cloud seemed to descend, and cover the whole ocean; as indeed it entirely hid the island of Caprea, and the promontory of Misenum. My mother strongly conjured me to make my escape at any rate, which, as I was young, I might easily do: as for herself, she said, her age and corpulency rendered all attempts of that sort impossible; however, she would willingly meet death, if she could have the satisfaction of seeing that she was not the occasion of mine. But I absolutely refused to leave her, and taking her by the hand, I led her on: she complied with great reluctance, and not without many reproaches to herself for retarding my flight. The ashes now began to fall upon us, though in no great quantity. I turned my head, and observed behind us a thick smoke, which came rolling after us like a torrent. I proposed while we had yet any light, to turn out of the high road, lest she should be pressed to death in the dark, by the croud that followed us. We had scarce stepped out of the path, when darkness overspread us, not like that of a cloudy night, or when there is no moon, but of a room when it is shut up, and all the lights extinct. Nothing then was to be heard but the shrieks of women, the screams of children, and the cries of men; some calling for their children,

children, others for their parents, others for their husbands, and only distinguishing each other by their voices; one lamenting his own fate, another that of his family; some wishing to die, from the very fear of dying, some lifting their hands to the gods; but the greater part imagining that the last and eternal night was come, which was to destroy both the * gods and the world together. Among these there were some who augmented the real terrors by imaginary ones, and made the frightened multitude falsely believe that Misenum was actually in flames. At length a glimmering light appeared, which we imagined to be rather the forerunner of an approaching burst of flames, (as in truth it was), than the return of day: however, the fire fell at a distance from us: then again we were immersed in thick darkness, and a heavy shower of ashes rained upon us, which we were obliged every now and then to shake off, otherwise we should have been crushed and buried in the heap. I might boast, that, during all this scene of horror, not a sigh or expression of fear escaped from me, had not my support been founded in that miserable, though strong consolation, that all mankind were involved in the same calamity, and that I imagined I was perishing with the world itself. At last, this dreadful darkness was dissipated by degrees, like a cloud or smoke; the real day returned, and even the sun appeared, though very faintly, and as when an eclipse is coming on. Every object that presented itself to our eyes (which were extremely weakened) seemed changed, being covered over with white

* The Stoic and Epicurean philosophers held, that the world was to be destroyed by fire, and all things fall again into original chaos; not excepting even the national gods themselves from the destruction of this general conflagration.

* ashes, as with a deep snow. We returned to Misenum, where we refreshed ourselves as well as we could, and passed an anxious night between hope and fear; though, indeed, with a much larger share of the latter: for the earthquake still continued, while several enthusiastic people ran up and down heightening their own and their friends calamities by terrible predictions. However, my mother and I, notwithstanding the danger we had passed, and that which still threatened us, had no thoughts of leaving the place, till we should receive some account from my uncle. —

And now you will read this narrative without any view of inserting it in your history, of which it is by no means worthy; and indeed you must impute it to your own request, if it shall appear scarce to deserve even the trouble of a letter. Farewell.

Epist. XXI. PLINY to CANINIUS.

I AM one of those who admire the ancients: yet I am very far from despising, as some affect to do, the genius of the moderns: nor can I suppose, that nature in these latter ages is so worn out, as to be incapable of any valuable production. On the contrary, I have lately had the pleasure of hearing Verginius Romanus read to a few select friends, a comedy so justly formed upon the plan of the ancients, that it may one day serve itself for a model. I know not whether he is in the number of your acquaintance; I am sure at least he deserves to be so, as he is greatly

* Mr Addison in his account of mount Vesuvio observed, that the air of the place is so very much impregnated with saltpetre, that one can scarce find a stone which has not the least white with it. *Travel*, 182.

distinguished by the probity of his manners, the elegance of his genius, and the variety of his productions. He has written some very agreeable pieces of the burlesque kind in Iambics, with much delicacy, wit, and humour, and I will add too, even eloquence; for every species of composition which is finished in its kind, may with propriety be termed eloquent. He has also composed some comedies after the manner of Menander and other approved authors of that age, which deserve to be ranked with those of Plautus and Terence. He has now, for the first time, attempted the ancient comedy, but in such a manner, as to shew he is a perfect master in this way. Strength, majesty, and delicacy, softness, poignancy, and wit, are the graces which shine out in this performance with full lustre. He represents virtuous characters with the highest distinction of honour, at the same time that he stigmatizes vitious ones with a noble indignation: whenever he makes use of feigned names, it is with great propriety, as he employs real ones with much justness. With respect only to myself, I should say he has erred through an excess of good-will, if I did not know that fiction is the privilege of poets. In a word, I will insist upon his letting me have the copy, that I may send it to you for your perusal, or rather that you may get it by heart; for I am well persuaded when you have once taken it up, you will not easily lay it aside. Farewell.

Epist. XXII. PLINY to TYRO.

A Great affair has lately been transacted here, which affects all who shall hereafter be appointed governors of provinces, as well as every man who too incautiously trusts his friends. Lustricus Bruttianus having detected his lieutenant Montanus

Montanus Atticinus in several enormous crimes, informed the emperor of them. Atticinus, on the other hand, added to his guilt by commencing a groundless prosecution against the friend whose confidence he had abused. His information was received, and I was one of the assessors at this trial. Both parties pleaded their own cause, and in a summary way confined themselves closely to the articles of the charge: a method by much the shortest of discovering the truth. Brutianus, as a proof of the undeserved confidence he had reposed in his friend, and that nothing but absolute necessity could have extorted from him this complaint, produced his will, all in the hand-writing of Atticinus. He then proceeded to open his charge, and clearly proved him guilty of the most infamous conduct. Atticinus, after some vain efforts to justify himself, retired; but his defence appeared as weak, as his accusation was wicked. It was proved, that he had bribed a slave belonging to the secretary of Brutianus, and by that means got into his possession his register-book, which he erased, and then made this his villanous act the foundation of a charge against his friend. The emperor's conduct in this trial was extremely noble: without collecting the voices with respect to Brutianus, he proceeded immediately to take them only in relation to Atticinus, who was accordingly condemned to banishment. Brutianus was acquitted not only with a very full and honourable testimony of his integrity, but with the credit of having behaved in this affair with great resolution. And indeed, after having vindicated his own character in few words, he supported his charge against Atticinus with much spirit, and approved himself no less a man of fortitude than of worth and honesty. I send you this account not only as a creation for your behaviour in the

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government

government you have obtained, and as a hint to depend upon yourself as much as possible, without relying too far upon your friends; but that you may be well assured, if you should happen to be imposed upon in the execution of your office (as far be it that you ever should), you will readily meet with satisfaction here. However, that you may stand in no need of it, let me entreat you to exert the utmost circumspection of your own vigilance; for the pleasure of being redressed, most certainly cannot compensate the uneasiness of being deceived. Farewell.

Epist. XXIII. PLINY to TRIARIUS.

YOU earnestly desire me to be an advocate in a cause committed to your care, reputable in itself, and wherein the pleader may gain applause. I will comply with your request, but not without a fee. Is it possible, you will say, that my friend Pliny should be so mercenary? In truth it is; and I insist upon a reward which will do me more honour than the most disinterested patronage. I beg of you then, and indeed I make it a previous condition, that Cremutius Ruso may be joined with me as counsel in this cause. This is a practice which I have frequently observed with respect to several distinguished youths; as I take infinite pleasure in introducing young men of merit to the bar, and assigning them over to me. But if ever I owed this good office to any man, it is certainly to Ruso, not only upon account of his family, but his tender affection to me; and it would afford me a very singular satisfaction to have an opportunity of seeing him draw the attention of the audience in the same court and the same cause with myself. This I now ask as an obligation to me; but when he has pleaded in your cause, you will esteem it as a
favour

favour done to you: for I will be answerable that he shall acquit himself in a manner equal to your wishes, as well as to my hopes and the importance of the cause. He is a youth of a most excellent disposition, and when once I shall have produced his merit, we shall soon see him exert the same generous office in forwarding that of others; as indeed no man without the support and encouragement of friends, and having proper opportunities thrown in his way, is able to rise at once from obscurity, by the brightness of his own unassisted genius.

Epist. XXIV. PLINY to MACER.

OF how much importance to an action is the station of the person who performs it! For the very same conduct shall be either greatly magnified, or entirely overlooked, as it happens to proceed from a person of conspicuous or obscure rank. I was sailing lately upon our lake, with an old man of my acquaintance, who desired me to observe a villa situated upon its banks, which had a chamber hanging over the water. From that room, said he, a woman of our city threw herself and her husband. Upon inquiring into the cause, he informed me, “That her
 “ husband having been long afflicted with an
 “ ulcer in those parts which modesty conceals,
 “ she prevailed with him at last to let her inspect
 “ the sore, assuring him at the same time, that
 “ she would most sincerely give her opinion
 “ whether there was a possibility of its being cu-
 “ red. Accordingly, upon viewing the ulcer, she
 “ found there was no hopes, and therefore advi-
 “ sed him to put an end to his life: to which she
 “ not only encouraged him by her example, but
 “ was actually the means of his death; for tying
 “ herself to her husband, she plunged with him in-

“to the lake.” Though this happened in the very city where I was born, I never heard it mentioned before; and yet that this action is less taken notice of than that famous one of Arria’s *, is not because it was less remarkable, but because the person who performed it was more obscure. Farewell.

Epist. XXV. PLINY to HISPANUS.

YOU write me, that Robustus, a Roman knight of great distinction, undertook a journey, in company with my friend Attilius Scaurus, as far as Ocriculum, since which time he has never been heard of. In compliance, therefore, with your desire, I shall send for Scaurus, in order to see if he can give us any light in tracing him out; though I fear, indeed, it will be to no purpose. I suspect an accident of the same unaccountable kind has attended Robustus, as formerly happened to my townsman Metilius Crispus. I procured a company for him in the army, and gave him when he set out 40,000 sesterces for his equipage: but I never received any letter from him afterwards, or could learn what became of him. Whether he was murdered by his servants, or together with them, is uncertain; however, neither he nor they ever appeared more. I wish we may not find it thus with respect to Robustus; nevertheless I shall send for Scaurus. I cannot refuse this either to your generous request, or the very laudable entreaties of that most excellent youth his son, who discovers as much good sense in the method, as he does filial affection in the zeal of his inquiry: and may we have the same success in finding his father, as he has had in discovering the person that accompanied him! Farewell.

* See an account of her, b. 3. let. 16.

Epist. XXVI. PLINY to SERVIANUS.

I Rejoice, and congratulate you, that you design your daughter for Fuscus Salinator. His family is patrician, his father is in high reputation; his mother is held in equal esteem. As for himself, he is studious, learned, and eloquent, and, with all the innocence of a child, unites the sprightliness of youth to the wisdom of age. I am not, believe me, deceived by my affection, when I give him this character; for though I love him, I confess, beyond measure, (as his friendship and esteem for me well deserve), yet partiality has no share in my judgment; on the contrary, the stronger my fondness of him is, the more rigorously I weigh his merit. I will venture then to assure you (and I speak it upon my own experience) you could not have formed to your wish a more accomplished son-in-law. May he soon present you with a grandson, who shall be the exact copy of his father! and with what pleasure shall I receive from the arms of two such friends their children or grandchildren, whom I shall claim a sort of right to embrace as my own! Farewell.

Epist. XXVII. PLINY to SEVERUS.

YOU desire me, as you are appointed consul elect *, to consider in what manner you

* The consuls, though they were chosen in August, did not enter upon their office till the first of January; during which interval they were styled *Consules designati*, consuls elect. It was usual for them upon that occasion to compliment the emperor, by whose appointment, after the dissolution of the republican government, they were chosen.

are to frame the speech which you intend in honour of the emperor. It is much easier, amidst that variety of topics which the virtues of this illustrious prince abundantly supply, to find materials for encomium, than to select them. However, I will send you my sentiments, or (what I rather chuse) I will give them to you in person, after having laid before you the difficulties which occur to me. I am doubtful then whether I should advise you to pursue the method, which I observed myself on the same occasion. When I was consul elect, I avoided running into the usual strain of compliment, which however far (as far certainly it would have been) from adulation, might yet bear the semblance of it. Not that I affected an uncommon spirit of freedom; but as well knowing the sentiments of our amiable prince, and being thoroughly persuaded, that the highest praise I could offer to him, would be to shew the world I was under no necessity of paying him any. When I reflected what profusion of honours had been heaped upon the very worst of his predecessors, nothing, I imagined, could more distinguish a prince of his real virtues, from those infamous emperors, than to address him in a different manner. And this I thought proper to observe in my speech, lest it might be suspected I passed over his glorious acts, not out of judgment, but inattention. Such was the method I then observed; but I am sensible the same measures are neither agreeable, nor indeed suitable to all alike. Besides the propriety of doing or omitting a thing depends not only upon persons, but time and circumstances; and as the late actions of our illustrious prince afford materials for panegyric, no less just than recent and magnificent, I doubt (as I said before) whether I should persuade you to act in this case as I did myself. In this, however, I am clear, that it

was

was proper to offer to your consideration the plan I pursued. Farewell.

Epist. XXVIII. PLINY to QUADRATUS.

I AM not unacquainted with the reason that prevented your attending my arrival in Campania. But absent as you were, might I have judged by the vast quantity of provisions of all sorts with which I was supplied by your orders, I should have imagined you had conveyed yourself hither with your whole possessions. I must own I was so arrant a clown, as to take all that was offered me; however, it was in compliance with the solicitations of your people, and fearing you would chide both them and me if I refused. But for the future, if you will not observe some measure, I must. And accordingly I assured your servants, if ever they were thus profuse in their bounty to me again, I would absolutely return the whole. You will tell me, I know, that I ought to consider every thing belonging to you, as entirely mine. I am extremely sensible of that; and therefore I would use them with the same moderation as my own. Farewell.

Epist. XXIX. PLINY to QUADRATUS.

A VIDIUS Quietus, who loved me with a singular affection, and (which gave me equal pleasure) approved of my conduct, used frequently to repeat this maxim, among others, of Thrasea's, with whom he was intimately acquainted; That "there are three sorts of causes which we ought to undertake; those of our friends, those of the deserted, and those which tend to public example." The reason we should engage in the cause of our friends requires no explanation; but the deserted have a claim to our assistance, because

because it shews a resolute and generous mind ; as we ought to rise in the cause where example is concerned, since it is of the last consequence whether a good or evil one prevails. To which I will add (perhaps in the spirit of ambition, however I will add) those of the splendid and illustrious kind. For it is reasonable, no doubt, sometimes to plead the cause of glory and fame, or in other words one's own. These are the limits (since you ask my sentiments) I would prescribe to a person of your dignity and moderation. Practice, I know, is generally esteemed, and in truth is, the best guide in the art of pleading. I have seen many who with small genius and no erudition have, merely by that single means, arrived to a good proficiency. Nevertheless, the observation of Pollio, or at least what usually passes for his, I have found by experience to be most true : " A good address at the bar," said he, " occasioned me much practice ; and, on the " other hand, much practice spoiled my address." The reason is, by too frequent a repetition it becomes rather a habit than a talent, and degenerates into a rash assurance, rather than settles into a just confidence. Accordingly we see that the great modesty of Isocrates, which, together with the weakness of his voice, prevented his appearing in public, did not by any means obstruct his attaining the character of a consummate orator. Let me farther advise you, to read and write, and meditate much, that you may be able to speak whenever you chuse ; and you never will chuse it, I well know, but when you ought. That at least is the restriction I laid down to myself. I have sometimes indeed pleaded, not so much from the single motive of reason, as necessity, (which, however, is the same thing), having on some occasions been appointed counsel by order of the senate ; but it was in cases which

which fell within Thrasea's third rule, that is, of the exemplary kind. I was advocate for the province of Bœtica, against Bæbius Massa; where the question being, whether they should be allowed to prosecute him, it passed in the affirmative. I appeared for them a second time against Cæcilius Classicus, and the point in debate was, whether the provincial officers who acted under him in his proconsulship, should be deemed accomplices with him? It was determined they should; and they were punished accordingly. I was counsel against Manius Priscus, who having been convicted of bribery, endeavoured to take advantage of the lenity of the law in that case, the penalty of which was by no means adequate to his enormous guilt: but he was sentenced to banishment. I defended Julius Bassus in an affair in which he acted imprudently, it is true, but not in the least with any ill intention: the matter was referred to the ordinary judges, and he was permitted in the mean while to retain his seat in the senate. I pleaded likewise not long since, on behalf of Varenus, who petitioned for leave to examine witnesses on his part; which was granted him. And now I will only wish, that I may, for the future, have such causes enjoined me by authority, in which it will become me to appear by choice. Farewell.

Epist. XXX. PLINY to FABATUS.

I AM under an obligation, most certainly, to celebrate your birthday as my own, since all the happiness of mine arises from yours, to whose care and diligence it is owing, that I am cheerful in town and easy in the country.—Your Camillian villa in Campania has suffered by the injuries of time, and is falling into decay; however, the most valuable parts of the building either remain entire,

entire, or are but slightly damaged, and it shall be my care to see it put into thorough repair.— Though I flatter myself I have many friends, yet scarce any, I doubt, of the sort you inquire after, and which the affair you mention demands. All mine lie among those whose employments engage them in town; whereas the conduct of country-business requires a person of a rough cast, and enured to labour, who will not look upon the office as mean, and can submit to a solitary life. The opinion you have of Rufus is suitable to one, distinguished as he was, by the friendship of your son, but what service he can be of to us upon this occasion, I know not; though I am well persuaded, he will rejoice to have it in his power to do us any. Farewell.

Epist. XXXI. PLINY to CORNELIANUS.

HAVING been lately summoned by Cæsar as one of his assessors to Centumcellæ (as it is now called), I received the most exquisite entertainment there. Could anything indeed afford a higher pleasure, than to see the emperor exercising his justice, his wisdom, and his affability, even in retirement, where those virtues are most observable? Various were the points brought in judgment before him, and which proved, in so many different instances, the great abilities of the judge. The cause of Claudius Ariston came on first. He is an Ephesian nobleman, of great munificence and unambitious popularity, whose virtues having rendered him obnoxious to a set of people of far different characters, they had spirited up an informer against him, of the same infamous stamp with themselves; but he was honourably acquitted. The next day, the cause of Gallita, accused of adultery, was determined. Her husband, who is a military tribune, was upon the point of offer-
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ing himself as a candidate for certain honours at Rome, but she had disgraced both him and herself by an intrigue with a centurion. The husband informed the consul's lieutenant, who wrote to the emperor concerning it. Cæsar, having examined the proofs, broke the centurion, and sentenced him to banishment. It remained that some punishment should be inflicted likewise upon the other party, as it is a crime of which both must necessarily be equally guilty. But the husband's affection for his wife inclined him to drop that part of the prosecution, not without some suspicion of connivance; for he continued to live with her even after he had commenced this prosecution, contenting himself, it should seem, with having removed his rival. But he was ordered to proceed in the suit: which though he did with great reluctance, it was necessary, however, she should be condemned. And she accordingly was, being given up to the punishment directed by the Julian law. The emperor thought proper to specify, in his decree, the name and office of the centurion, that it might appear he passed it in virtue of military discipline; lest it should be imagined he claimed a particular cognisance in every case of the same nature. The third day was employed in examining into an affair which had occasioned much and various speculation; it was concerning the will of Julius Tiro, part of which was plainly genuine, the other part, it was said, was forged. The persons accused of this fraud were Sempronius Senecio, a Roman knight, and Eurythmus, Cæsar's freedman and procurator. The heirs jointly petitioned the emperor, when he was in Dacia, that he would reserve to himself the trial of this cause; to which he accordingly consented. At his return from that expedition, he appointed a day for the hearing; and when some of the heirs,

as in respect to Eurythmus, offered to withdraw the suit, the emperor nobly replied, *He is not Polyletus, nor am I Nero.* However, he indulged the petitioners with an adjournment, and the time being expired, he now sat to hear the cause. Two of the heirs appeared, and desired, that either their whole number might be compelled to plead, as they had all joined in the information, or that they also might have leave to desist. Cæsar spoke with great wisdom and moderation; and when the counsel on the part of Senecio and Eurythmus said, that unless their clients were heard, they would remain under the suspicion of guilt. *I am not concerned,* said the emperor, *what suspicions they may lie under, it is I that am suspected;* and then turning to us, *Advise me,* said he, *how to act in this affair, for you see they complain that I do not give them leave to withdraw their suit.* At length, by the advice of the council, he ordered notice to be given to the heirs, that they should either go on with the cause, or each of them justify their reasons for not doing so; otherwise that he would pass sentence upon them as calumniators. Thus you see how usefully and seriously we spent our time, which however was intermixed with diversions of the most agreeable kind. We were every day invited to Cæsar's table, which, for so great a prince, was spread with much plainness and simplicity. There we were either entertained with interludes, or passed the night in the most pleasing conversation. When we took our leave of him the last day, he made each of us presents; so studious is he to exert the benevolence of his temper upon all occasions! As for myself, I was not only charmed with the dignity and wisdom of the judge, the honour done to the assessor, the ease and unrestrained freedom of the conversation, but with the agreeable situation of the place. This delightful villa

villa is surrounded by the most verdant meadows, and commands a fine view of the sea, which forms itself here into a spacious harbour, in the figure of an amphitheatre. The left hand of this port is defended by exceeding strong works, as they are now actually employed in carrying on the same on the opposite side. An artificial island, which is rising in the mouth of the harbour, will break the force of the waves, and afford a safe passage to ships on each side. In order for the construction of this wonderful instance of art, stones of a most enormous size are transported hither in a sort of pontoons, and being thrown one upon the other, are fixed by their own weight, gradually accumulating in the manner, as it were, of a sand-bank. It already lifts its rocky back above the ocean, while the waves which beat upon it, being tossed to an immense height, foam with a prodigious noise, and whiten all the sea round. To these stones are added large piles, which in time will give it the appearance of a natural island. This haven is to be called by the name of its great author, and will prove of infinite benefit, by affording a very secure retreat to ships on that extensive and dangerous coast. Farewell.

Epist. XXXII. PLINY TO QUINTILIAN.

THough you are extremely moderate in your desires, and have bestowed an education on your daughter * suitable to your own character, and

* This letter has been generally supposed to be addressed to the famous Quintilian, author of that excellent treatise upon cratery, which is still extant. But there are very strong reasons to believe, that either there is some error in the title, or that it is addressed

and that of Tullius her grandfather ; yet as she is going to be married to a person of so great distinction as Nonius Celer, whose station requires a certain splendour of living, it will be necessary to consider the rank of her husband in her cloaths and equipage : circumstances which though they do not augment our real dignity, yet certainly adorn and grace it. But as I am sensible your fortune is not equal to the greatness of your mind, I claim to myself a part of your expense, and, like another father, present the young lady with fifty thousand sesterces. The sum should be larger, but that I am well persuaded the smallness of the present is the only consideration that can prevail with your modesty not to refuse it. Farewell.

dress'd to another person of the same name. Quinctilian in the opening of his sixth b. *de Inst. Orat.* takes occasion to mention his family, where he is lamenting to his friend Victorius the loss of his eldest son, which had just then happened. He takes notice at the same time of the deaths of his wife and younger son ; and, after some very pathetic reflections, closes the whole with this observation : *Nos miseri, sicut facultates patrimonii nostri, ita hoc opus aliis paramus, aliis relinquemus.* This preface may be considered then as his domestic history. But he does not give the least hint of a daughter : which seems difficult to be accounted for upon any other reason than that he never had one. For if she was dead, it is highly natural to imagine he would have deplored the loss of her among that of the rest of his children. If she was living, how could he lament the necessity of leaving his patrimony to strangers ? or if she was unworthy of his tenderness, why does he not complain of that unhappiness among his other misfortunes ? Vid. *Traclat. de Quinct.* par l' Abbé Gedoy, in the preface.

Epist. XXXIII. PLINY to ROMANUS.

Now, says Vulcan, cease your works begun.
Thus whether you are engaged in reading or writing, away with your books and papers, and take up my divine oration, as those Cyclops did the arms of Æneas. Now tell me, could I introduce my speech to you with an air of more assurance? But in good earnest, I put it into your hands as the best of my performances * ; for it is myself only that I pretend to rival. It was spoken in defence of Accia Variola ; and the dignity of the person interested in it, the singularity of the occasion, together with the majesty of the tribunal, conspire to render it extremely remarkable. Figure to yourself a lady ennobled not only by her birth, but her marriage to a person of prætorian rank, disinherited by her father, and suing for her patrimony in the centumviral court, within eleven days after this old man, seized with a fit of love when he was fourscore years of age, had brought home a mother-in-law to his daughter. Imagine the solemnity of a court of justice, composed of one hundred and eighty judges, (for that is the number of which it consists) ; friends innumerable attended on both parties ; the benches infinitely thronged, and a deep circle of people encompassing the judges, at the same time that numbers pressed round the tribunal ; even the very galleries lined with men and women, hanging over with the greatest earnestness, (who though they might see tolerably well, it was scarce possible for them to hear a word) ; represent to yourself, in short, fathers, daughters, and mo-

* Sidonius Apollinaris says, that Pliny acquired more honour by this speech, even than by his incomparable panegyric upon Trajan.

thers-in-law, all deeply interesting themselves in the event of this important trial. The sentiments of the judges were divided, two of the courts being for us, and two against us. It is something remarkable, that the same question debated before the same judges, and pleaded by the same advocates, and at the same time, should happen to receive so different a decision, that one would almost imagine it was more than accident. However, in the final event, the mother-in-law, who claimed under the will a sixth part of the inheritance, lost her cause. Suberinus * was also excluded his pretensions; who though he was disinherited by his father, without daring to vindicate his own patrimony, had yet the singular assurance to demand that of another. I have been thus particular in giving you a detail of the circumstances which attended this cause, not only that my letter might inform you of what you could not learn by my speech; but also (for I will honestly own the artifice) in order to your reading it with more pleasure, by being thus introduced, as it were, into the audience. And extensive as this pleading is, I do not despair of its recommending itself to you, as much as if it had the grace of brevity. The abundance of matter, the just order in which it is placed, the little narrations that are distributed throughout, together with the variety of the style, will always give it an air of novelty. I will even venture to say to you (what I durst not to any one else), that a spirit of great fire and sublimity breaks out in many parts of it, at the same time that in others it is wrought up with much delicacy and closeness of reasoning. I was frequently obliged

* This Suberinus (the commentators suppose) was son to the woman whom Accia's father had married in his old age.

to intermix dry computations with the elevated and pathetic, and to descend from the orator almost to the accountant ; so that you will sometimes imagine the scene was changed from the solemnity of the centumviral tribunal, to that of a private and inferior one. I gave a loose to my indignation, my resentment, and my compassion ; and, in steering through this illustrious cause, was governed by turns with every varying gust of the passions. In a word, my particular friends look upon this speech (and I will venture to repeat it again) as my best performance, esteeming it the * Ctesiphon of my orations : whether with reason or not, you will easily judge, who have them all so perfectly in your memory, as to be able, while you are reading this, to compare it with my former, without the trouble of turning to them. Farewell.

Epist. XXXIV. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

YOU acted right in promising an entertainment of gladiators to our good friends the citizens of Verona, not only as they have long since distinguished you with their peculiar esteem and veneration ; but as it was from thence also you received that amiable object of your most tender affection, your late excellent wife. And since you owed some monument or public shew to her memory, what other spectacle could you have exhibited more proper to the † occasion ?
besides,

* An oration of Demosthenes in defence of Ctesiphon, esteemed the best of that noble orator's speeches.

† It was an opinion which unhappily prevailed in the ancient Pagan world, that the ghosts of the deceased were rendered propitious by human blood.
This

besides, you were so unanimously pressed to do so, that to have refused, would have had the appearance rather of obstinacy than resolution. The readiness with which you granted this request, and the * magnificent manner in which you performed it, is much to your honour ; for a greatness of soul is seen in these smaller instances, as well as in matters of higher moment. I am sorry the African panthers, which you had largely provided for this purpose, did not arrive time enough ; but though they were delayed by the tempestuous season, the obligation to you is equally the same, since it was not your fault that they were not exhibited. Farewell.

This absurd notion gave rise to these barbarous gladiatorial combats, which at first were only exhibited at funeral obsequies, and none but criminals were appointed to those mortal encounters. But in process of time they became part of the public entertainments, and persons were trained up on purpose for these inhuman shews.

* The amphitheatre in which these shews were exhibited, is still to be seen in Verona, whose inside is the most entire of any now in being. It is computed to have room to contain upwards of three and twenty thousand spectators to sit commodiously. •

The End of the FIRST VOLUME.

T H E
E P I S T L E S

O F

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

Translated from the Original LATIN.

With EXPLANATORY NOTES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

EDINBURGH:

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For ALEX. DONALDSON.

MDCCLXII.



T H E
E P I S T L E S
O F
P L I N Y.



B O O K VII.



Epist. I. PLINY to RESTITUTUS.

THIS obstinate illness of yours alarms me ;
and though I know you to be most re-
markably temperate, yet I am afraid
your disease should get the better of your mode-
ration. Let me entreat you then to resist it with
a determined abstemiousness : a remedy, be as-
sured, of all others the most noble, as well as the
most salutary. There is nothing impracticable
in what I recommend : it is a rule, at least, which
I always direct my family to observe with respect
to myself. I hope, I tell them, that should I be
attacked with any disorder, I shall desire nothing
of

of which I either ought to be ashamed, or have reason to repent; however, if my distemper should prevail over my resolution, I forbid that any thing be given me but by the consent of my physicians; and I assure the people about me, that I shall resent their compliance with me in things improper, as much as another man would their refusal. I had once a most violent fever; when the fit was a little abated, and I had been anointed *, my physician offered me something to drink; I desired he would first feel my pulse, and upon his seeming to think the fit was not quite off, I instantly returned the cup, though it was just at my lips. Afterwards, when I was preparing to go into the bath, twenty days from the first attack of my illness, perceiving the physicians whispering together, I inquired what they were saying. They replied, they were of opinion I might possibly bathe with safety, however that they were not without some suspicion of hazard. What occasion is there, said I, of doing it at all? And thus, with great complacency, I gave up a pleasure I was upon the point of enjoying, and abstained from the bath with the same composure I was going to enter it. I mention this, not only in order to enforce my advice by example; but also that this letter may be a sort of tie upon me to persevere in the same resolute abstinence for the future. Farewell.

Epist. II. PLINY to JUSTUS.

HOW is it consistent, that you should affirm you are at once engaged in a multiplicity of business, and yet at the same time ex-

* Unction was much esteemed and prescribed by the ancients. Celsus, who flourished, it is supposed, about this time, expressly recommends it in the remission of acute distempers.

press an earnest desire to see my writings, upon which even the idle will scarce bestow some of their useless hours? I will not then break in upon your affairs during this summer-season; but when the return of winter shall make it reasonable to suppose that your evenings at least may be disengaged, I will look over my trifles for something to amuse your vacant hours. In the meanwhile, I shall be well satisfied, if my letters are not troublesome; as I suspect they are, and therefore shorten them. Farewell.

Epist. III. PLINY to PRÆSENS.

ARE you resolved then to stay sometimes in Lucania, and sometimes in Campania? Your answer, I suppose, will be, I was born in the former, my wife in the latter. This, I admit, may be a reason for a long absence, but I cannot allow that it will justify a perpetual one. But are you resolved in good earnest never to return to Rome, that theatre of dignities, preferment, and society of every sort? Are you obstinately bent to live your own master, and sleep and rise when you think proper? Will you never change your country-dress for the habit of the town, but spend your whole days unenbarrassed by business? It is time, however, you should revisit our scene of hurry, were it only that your rural pleasures may not grow languid by enjoyment: appear at the levees of the great, that you may enjoy the same honour yourself with more satisfaction; and mix in our croud, that you may have a stronger relish for the charms of solitude. But am I not imprudently retarding the friend I would recall? it is these very circumstances, perhaps, that induce you every day more and more to wrap yourself up in retirement. All however I mean to persuade you to, is only to intermit, not renounce

your repose. If I were to invite you to a feast, as I would blend dishes of a sharper taste, with those of a more luscious kind, in order to raise the edge of your palate by the one, which had been flattened by the other ; so I now advise you to enliven the smooth pleasures of life, with those of a quicker relish. Farewell.

Epist. IV. PLINY to PONTIUS.

YOU say you have read my poems ; you desire too to be informed, how it happened that a man of my gravity (as you are pleased to call me, though in truth only not a trifle) could at first fall into this way of composition. To take the account then a good way backwards, I must acquaint you, that I had always an inclination to poetry, insomuch that when I was fourteen years of age, I composed a tragedy in Greek. If you should ask me what sort of one ? I protest I don't know ; all that I remeber of it is, that it was called a tragedy. Some time afterwards, in my return from the army, being detained in the island of Icaria by contrary winds, I vented my spleen against that place in some Latin elegies. I have since made some attempts in the heroic kind ; but these are the first Hendecasyllables I ever composed ; to which the following accident gave birth. The treatise of Asinius Gallus was read to me one day at Laurentinum, wherein he draws a comparison between his father and Cicero ; and there I met with an epigram of Tully's on his favourite Tiro. Upon retiring to take my afternoon's nap (for it was summer-time), and not being able to sleep, I began to reflect that the greatest orators have been fond of poetry, and valued themselves upon it. I tried therefore what I could do in this way ; and though I had long refused myself to things of this nature, I struck out, in a much shorter time than I could have imagined, the following

lowing lines upon the subject which gave me the first hint :

*When Gallus I read, who pretends that his fire
Had far more than Tully poetical fire,
The wisest of men, I perceiv'd, held it fit
To temper his wisdom with love and with wit ;
For Tully, grave Tully, in amorous strains,
Of the frauds of his paramour Tiro complains ;
That faithless to love, and to pleasure untrue,
From his promis'd embrace the arch wanton with-
drew.*

*Then said I to my heart, Why shouldst thou conceal
The sweetest of passions, the love which you feel—
Yes, fly, wanton muse, and proclaim it around,
Thy Pliny has lov'd, and his Tiro has found ;
The coy one so artful, who sweetly denies,
And from the soft flame, but to heighten it, flies.*

From this I turned to elegy, which I performed with the same ease ; and being thus drawn in by the facility with which the Muses yielded to me, I proceeded to add to the number of my productions of this kind. At my return to Rome, I shew'd my performances to some of my friends, who were pleased to approve of them. Afterwards, whenever I had leisure, and particularly when I travelled, I made several other attempts in the poetical way. At length I determined, after the example of many others, to publish a separate volume of these poems ; and I have no reason to repent of my resolution. They are much inquired after, and are in every body's hands, as they have even tempted the Greeks to learn our language, who sing them to their harps and lyres. But will you not imagine I begin to rave ? remember, however, poets have that privilege. The truth is, I am not giving you my own judgment, but that of others, which, be it right or wrong,

I am much pleased with ; and have only to wish that posterity may pass the same. Farewell.

Epist. V. PLINY to CALPHURNIA *.

IT is incredible how eagerly I desire to see you. Love is the first spring of it ; and next my being unaccustomed to a separation ! Hence it is, I lie awake the greatest part of the night thinking of you, and (to use a very common, but very true expression) my feet carry me of their own accord to your apartment, at those hours I used to visit you ; but not finding you there, I return with as much sorrow and disappointment as an excluded lover. The only intermission my anxiety knows, is when I am engaged at the bar, and in the causes of my friends. Judge how wretched must his life be, who finds no repose but in business ; no consolation but in a croud. Farewell.

Epist. VI. PLINY to MACRINUS.

AN uncommon and very remarkable turn has happened in the affair of † Varenus, the consequence of which is yet in suspense. The Bithynians, it is said, have dropped their prosecution of him ; being convinced at last, that it was extremely ill founded. A deputy from that province is arrived, who has brought with him a decree of their assembly ; copies of which he has delivered to Cæsar, to several of the principal persons in Rome, and to us the advocates for Varenus. Magius, however, whom I mentioned in my last letter to you, persists in his prosecution, and, for that purpose, is incessantly teasing the worthy Nigrinus. This excellent person was counsel for him in his former petition to the consuls, that Varenus might be compelled to pro-

* His wife. † See book 5. let. 20.

duce his accounts. Upon this occasion, as I attended Varenus merely as a friend, I determined to be silent. I thought it highly imprudent for me, who was appointed his counsel by the senate, to attempt to defend him as a person accused, when it was his business to insist that there was actually no charge subsisting against him. However, when Nigrinus had finished his speech, the consuls turning their eyes upon me, I rose up, and, *when they should hear, I said, what the real deputies from the province had to object against the motion of Nigrinus, they would be sensible that my silence was not without just reason.* Upon this Nigrinus asked me to whom these deputies were sent? I replied, *That the decree of the province was directed to me among others.* He returned, *That is a point, though it may be clear to you, I am not so well satisfied of.* To this I answered, *Though it may not be so evident to you, who are concerned to support the accusation, it may be extremely clear to me, who am on the more favourable side.* Then Polyænus, the deputy from the province, acquainted the senate with the reasons for superseding the prosecution, but desired it might be without prejudice to Cæsar's determination. Magius answered him; Polyænus replied; as for myself, I only now and then threw in a word, observing in general a profound silence. For I have learned, that upon some occasions there is as much rhetoric in taciturnity, as in all the pomp of the most studied eloquence: and I remember, in some criminal cases, to have done even more service to my clients by a judicious silence, than I could have expected from the most artful speech. To enter into the subject of eloquence, is indeed very foreign to the intent of my letter, yet allow me to give you one instance in proof of the observation I just mentioned. A certain lady having lost her son, suspected that his freedmen whom he had appointed coheirs with

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her, were guilty of forging the will and poisoning him. Accordingly she charged them with the fact before the emperor, who directed Julius Servianus to try the cause. I was counsel for the defendants; and the case being exceedingly remarkable, and the advocates concerned on both sides of high reputation, it drew together a very numerous audience. The event was, the servants being put to the torture, my clients were acquitted. But the mother applied a second time to the emperor, pretending she had discovered some new evidence. Servianus was therefore directed to rehear the cause, and see if she could produce any fresh proofs. Julius Africanus was counsel for the mother, a young man of good parts, but little experience. He is grandson to the famous orator of that name, of whom it is reported that Passienus Crispus hearing him one day plead, archly said, *All this, I own, is extremely fine; but what is it to the purpose?* Julius Africanus, I say, having harangued a great deal, and exhausted the portion of time allotted to him, entreated Servianus to allow him to add one word more. When he had finished, and the eyes of the whole assembly had been fixed a considerable time upon me, I rose up; *I would have answered Africanus*, said I, *if he had added that one word he begged leave to do, in which I doubt not he would have told us something we had not heard before.* I do not remember to have gained so much applause by any speech that I ever made, as I did here upon making none. Thus the little that I said for Varenus, was received with the same general approbation. The consuls, agreeably to the request of Polyænus, reserved the whole affair for the determination of the emperor, whose resolution I impatiently wait for; as that will decide, whether I may sit down in full security with respect to Varenus; or must again re-
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new all my care and solicitude upon his account.
Farewell.

Epist. VII. PLINY to SATURNINUS.

LAtely I both presented your thanks to our friend Priscus, and have again repeated them, since such was your desire; and that most willingly. It is with great pleasure I see so much harmony subsist between two such worthy men, whom I tenderly esteem, and that you consider each other's friendship as the highest obligation. For he professes also on his part to receive much happiness from yours, and, with a very generous contention, endeavours to rival you in that reciprocal affection, which time, I am persuaded, will augment.

I regret that any business should call you off from your studies; however, when you shall have compromised (as you say you are upon the point of doing) one cause, and brought the other to a hearing, you will be at leisure to enjoy the retirement of the country; and when you are satiated with that, we may hope for your return hither.
Farewell.

Epist. VIII. PLINY to PRISCUS.

ICannot express how agreeable it is to me, that our friend Saturninus sends me letter after letter upon the subject of your favours to him. May you go on as you began, and continue to cherish an affection for so worthy a man, from whose friendship you will receive a strong and lasting pleasure. For as he is greatly distinguished by every other virtue, so particularly by his invariable attachment to his friends. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. IX. PLINY to CORNELIUS FUSCUS.

YOU desire to know from me, in what method you ought to pursue your studies in that retirement to which you have long since withdrawn. In the first place then, I look upon it as a very advantageous practice (and it is what many recommend) to translate either from Greek into Latin, or from Latin into Greek. By this means you will furnish yourself with noble and proper expressions, with variety of beautiful figures, and an ease and strength of style. Besides, by imitating the most approved authors, you will find your imagination heated, and fall insensibly into a similar turn of thought; at the same time that those things which you may possibly have overlooked in a common way of reading, cannot escape you in translating: and this method will open your understanding, and improve your judgment. It may not be amiss after you have read an author, in order to make yourself master of his subject and argument, from his reader to turn, as it were, his rival, and attempt something of your own in the same way; and then make an impartial comparison between your performance and his, in order to see in what points either you or he most happily succeeded. It will be a matter of very pleasing congratulation to yourself, if you shall find in some things, that you have the advantage of him, as it will be a great mortification if he should rise above you in all. You may sometimes venture, in these little essays, to try your strength upon the most shining passages of a distinguished author. The attempt, indeed, will be something bold; but as it is a contention which passes in secret, it cannot be taxed with presumption. Not but that we have seen instances of persons, who have publicly entered this
 sort

sort of lists with great success, and while they did not despair of overtaking, have gloriously advanced before those whom they thought it sufficient honour to follow. After you have thus finished a composition, you may lay it aside, until it is no longer fresh in your memory, and then take it up, in order to revise and correct it. You will find several things to retain, but still more to reject; you will add a new thought here, and alter another there. It is a laborious and tedious task, I own, thus to re-enflame the mind after the first heat is over, to recover an impulse when its force has been checked and spent, in a word, to interweave new parts into the texture of a composition, without disturbing or confounding the original plan; but the advantage attending this method will overbalance the difficulty. I know the bent of your present attention is directed towards the eloquence of the bar; but I would not for that reason advise you never to quit the style of dispute and contention. As land is improved by sowing it with various seeds, so is the mind by exercising it with different studies. I would recommend it to you therefore, sometimes to single out a fine passage of history; sometimes to exercise yourself in the epistolary style, and sometimes the poetical. For it frequently happens, that in pleading one has occasion to make use not only of historical, but even poetical descriptions; as by the epistolary manner of writing you will acquire a close and easy expression. It will be extremely proper also to unbend your mind with poetry: when I say so, I do not mean that species of it which turns upon subjects of great length, (for that is fit only for persons of much leisure), but those little pieces of the epigrammatic kind, which serve as proper reliefs to, and are consistent with employments of every sort. They commonly go under the title of poetical

etical amusements ; but these amusements have sometimes gained as much reputation to their authors, as works of a more serious nature ; and thus (for while I am exhorting you to poetry, why should I not be poetical myself?)

*As yielding wax the artist's skill commands,
 Submissive shap'd beneath his forming hands ;
 Now dreadful stands in arms a Mars confest ;
 Or now with Venus' softer air imprest ;
 A wanton Cupid now the mold belies ;
 Now shines, jeverely chaste, a Pallas wise :
 As not alone to quench the raging flame,
 The sacred fountain pours her friendly stream :
 But sweetly gliding through the flow'ry green,
 Spreads glad refreshment o'er the smiling scene :
 So, form'd by science, should the ductile mind
 Receive, distinct, each various art refin'd.*

In this manner the greatest men, as well as the greatest orators, used either to exercise or amuse themselves, or rather indeed did both. It is surprising how much the mind is entertained and enlivened by these little poetical compositions, as they turn upon subjects of gallantry, satire, tenderness, politeness, and every thing, in short, that concerns life and the affairs of the world. Besides, the same advantage attends these, as every other sort of poems, that we turn from them to prose with so much the more pleasure, after having experienced the difficulty of being constrained and fettered by numbers. And now, perhaps, I have troubled you upon this subject longer than you desired ; however, there is one thing which I have omitted : I have not told you what kind of authors you should read ; though indeed that was sufficiently implied when I mentioned, what subjects I would recommend for your compositions. You will remember, that
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the most approved writers of each sort are to be carefully chosen ; for, as it has been well observed, “ though we should read much, we should “ not read many * books.” Who those authors

* Thus the noble and polite moralist speaking of the influence which our reading has upon our taste and manners, thinks it improper “ to call a man “ well read, who reads many authors ; since he must “ of necessity have more ill models than good ; and “ be more stuffed with bombast, ill fancy, and wry “ thought, than filled with solid sense and just imagination.” [Charact. v. 1. 142.] When the Goths over ran Greece, the libraries escaped their destruction, by a notion which some of their leaders industriously propagated among them, that it would be more for their interest to leave those spoils untouched to their enemies ; as being proper to enervate their minds, and amuse them with vain and idle speculations. Truth perhaps has been less a gainer by this multiplicity of books, than error ; and it may be a question, whether the excellent models which have been delivered down to us from antiquity, together with those few which modern times have produced, by any means balance the immoderate weight which must be thrown into the opposite scale of writers. The truth is, though we may be learned by other mens reflections, wise we can only be by our own : and the maxim here recommended by Pliny, would well deserve the attention of the studious, though no other inconvenience attended the reading of many books, than that which Sir William Temple apprehends from it ; the lessening the force and growth of a man’s own genius. For it may be justly doubted, with that ingenious author, “ whether the “ weight and number of so many other mens “ thoughts and notions, may not suppress his own, “ or hinder the motion or agitation of them, from “ which all invention arises ; as heaping on wood, “ or too many sticks, or too close together, suppresses, and sometimes quite extinguishes a little “ spark, that would otherwise have grown up to a “ noble flame.” [Essay on learning, v. 1. 158.]

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are, is so clearly settled, and so generally known, that I need not point them out to you ; besides, I have already extended this letter to such an immoderate length, that I have interrupted, I fear, too long those studies I have been recommending. I will here resign you therefore to your papers, which you will now resume ; and either pursue the studies you were before engaged in, or enter upon some of those which I have advised. Farewell.

Epist. X. PLINY to MACRINUS.

AS I am always desirous to know the conclusion of an affair, when the narrative has been interrupted in the beginning ; so, I imagine, you will be glad to be informed of the event of the cause between the Bithynians and Varenus. It was pleaded before the emperor by Polyænus on one side, and Magius on the other. When Cæsar had heard both, *Neither party*, said he, *shall have reason to complain of the delay ; but I will take care to inform myself of the real sentiments of the province.* In the mean while, Varenus has gained a very considerable point ; for can any thing make the justness of his accusation appear more doubtful, than that it is a question whether he is accused at all ? We have only to wish, that the province may not again approve of what, it is said, she has condemned, and repent of her repentance. Farewell.

Epist. XI. PLINY to FABATUS*.

YOU are surprised, that my freedman Hermes has sold to Corellia, for seven hundred thousand sesterces, the five twelfths of my lands of inheritance, which I had directed to be

* His wife's grandfather.

fold to the highest bidder, and that without waiting for the time of public auction. And as you think it might have produced nine hundred thousand, you are so much the more desirous to know whether I am inclined to ratify what he has done. I am; and for such reasons, I hope, as not only you will approve, but will also excuse me to my fellow-coheirs, for having, upon a motive of stronger influence, separated my interest from theirs. I have the highest esteem for Correllia, both as the sister of Rufus, whose memory will ever be sacred to me, and as she was an intimate friend of my mother's. Besides, that excellent man Minutius Tullius, her husband, has every claim to my affection that a long friendship can give him; as there was likewise so strict an intimacy between her son and me, that I fixed upon him to preside at the games which I exhibited when I was elected præor. This lady, when I was last in the country, expressed a strong inclination to purchase something upon our lake of Comum; I therefore made her an offer, at her own price, of any part of my estate there, except what came to me from my father and mother; for that I could not consent to part with, even to Correllia. When the inheritance in question fell to me, I wrote to acquaint her it was to be sold. This letter I sent by Hermes, who, upon her requesting him that he would immediately let her have my proportion of it, consented to do so. Am I not then obliged to confirm what he has thus done in pursuance of my inclinations? I have only to entreat my fellow-coheirs, that they would not take it ill at my hands, that I have made a separate sale of what I had certainly a right to dispose of. They are under no necessity of being governed by my example, since they have not the same connections with Correllia that I have.

They are at full liberty therefore to be guided by interest, which in my own case I chose to sacrifice to friendship. Farewell.

Epist. XII. PLINY to MINUTIUS.

I Have been so much the longer in sending you the little book which I have drawn up at your desire, for the use of your, or rather, I should say our friend, (for what is there that we do not possess in common?), that you might have no time to correct, that is, to spoil it. After all, whether you will or will not find time for that purpose, I know not; but of this I am sure, you will most certainly spoil it, if, according to the custom of you people of a vitiated taste, you should throw out its most shining parts. I shall forgive you, however, if you should, and shall, upon some future occasion, very successfully make use of what your false delicacy rejects; as I doubt not to receive your applause for these different expressions which I have interlined. I suspected you would call every thing unnatural and bombast which is elevated and sounding; I thought proper therefore, for your ease, to vary the phrase, and take it something lower, or rather indeed, to debase it; though you, I know, (for why should I not rally your sickly taste?), will esteem it an improvement. Thus far, in order to make you smile in the midst of your serious occupations, I have been jocose; but, without doubt, I am wondrous serious in what I am going to add: I expect to be reimbursed the charges I have been at in sending a messenger express with this. Now are you not disposed to condemn this petition, not only in part, but in the whole, and insist upon it, that you ought not to pay for a thing which is absolutely of no value? Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XIII. PLINY to FEROX.

YOUR letter intimates, that you do, and do not study. This will appear a little enigmatical till I explain it. You expressly say indeed, that you have bid adieu to contemplation; but such an air of elegance runs through your whole letter, that it is impossible it should have been composed without much thought; unless you are privileged beyond the rest of mankind, and can write with so much politeness, thus carelessly and at your ease. Farewell.

Epist. XIV. PLINY to CORELLIA.

YOU act indeed most honourably in desiring and earnestly pressing me to take for my share of the estate you purchased of me, not after the rate of seven hundred thousand sesterces * for the whole, as my freedman sold it to you; but in the proportion of nine hundred thousand, agreeable to what you gave to the farmers of the † twentieths for their part. But I must desire and insist in my turn, that you would consider not only what is suitable to your character, but what is worthy of mine; and that you would suffer me to oppose your inclination in this single instance, with the same warmth that I obey it in all others. Farewell.

* See letter the 11th of this book.

† Augustus imposed a tax of the 20th part of all legacies and inheritances, which he appropriated to the support of the army. This was deemed a heavy imposition, and accordingly it was eased in several points by succeeding emperors, particularly by Trajan, as appears from our author's noble panegyric upon him [sect. 37. &c.], but it was not wholly abolished till the time of Antoninus Pius.

Epist. XV. PLINY to SATURNINUS.

YOU ask me *how I pass my time*? You know how much of it is disposed in the business of my post; what remains I devote to the service of my friends, and sometimes to my books; an employment which, though I will not venture to affirm it would be better, I am sure it would be happier, if I could say not only sometimes, but altogether engages me. I should be concerned to hear, that yours are of the sort which are least agreeable to you, if I did not know you are busied in the noblest offices; as nothing can be more worthy of applause, than to be active in the interest of one's country, and one's friends.

I was well persuaded the company of our friend Priscus would be extremely agreeable to you, as I know the simplicity, innocence, and politeness of his manners: but I had yet to learn (what I had the pleasure to be informed of by your letter) that he so obligingly remembers the services I have done him. Farewell.

Epist. XVI. PLINY to FABATUS.

CAlestrius Tyro, to whom I am united by every public and private connection, is in the number of my most intimate friends. We served together in the army, as we were both of us quæstors at the same time to Cæsar. He got the start of me indeed in the tribunate, by the privilege which the law gives to those who have * children; but I overtook him in the prætorship

* A law at first proposed by Augustus, but which afterwards with several alterations passed in the consulship

ship by the indulgence of the emperor, who dispensed with my wanting a year of the legal age for that office. I frequently retire with him to his country-villas, as he often takes the benefit of the air at mine. He is now appointed proconsul of Boëtica, and he proposes to pass through Ticinum, in his way to that province. I hope, and indeed am well assured, I can easily prevail with him to turn out of his road to your house, if you should have an inclination to make any of those slaves free before a magistrate, to whom you have already given their liberty in the presence of your friends. You need be under no apprehension that he will look upon this as a trouble, who, I am sure, would willingly travel round the world for my sake. I beg therefore you would lay aside all scruple, and only consider what will be most agreeable to yourself; for be assured, he will take as much pleasure in executing my commands, as I do in obeying yours. Farewell.

Epist. XVII. PLINY to CELER.

EVERY author has his particular reasons for reciting his works. My principal motive is to receive proper criticisms upon such points as may, and undoubtedly will sometimes, escape my

fulshipp of Papius and Poppeas, A. U. 762.; in which amongst other things it was enacted, “ That
 “ all magistrates should take precedence according
 “ to the number of their children; that in elections
 “ those candidates should be preferred who had the
 “ most numerous offspring; and that any person
 “ might stand sooner than ordinary for an office, if
 “ he had as many children as he wanted years to be
 “ capable of bearing such a dignity.” Vid. Lipsii
 Excurs. ad Tacit. An. 1. 3.

own notice. I cannot therefore but be surpris'd to find (what your letter assures me), that there are some who blame me for reciting my speeches : unless, perhaps, they are of opinion, that this is the single species of composition that ought to be privileged from any correction. If so, I would willingly ask them why they allow (if indeed they do allow) that history may be recited, since it is a work which ought to be devoted to truth, not ostentation ? or why tragedy, when it is adapted to action and the stage, not to a private audience ? or lyric poetry, as it is not a reader that it requires, but a chorus of voices and instruments ? But, possibly, they will reply, that, in the instances mentioned, custom has made it usual : I should be glad to know then, if they think the person who first introduced this custom is to be condemned ? Besides, the rehearsal of orations is no unprecedented thing either with us or the Grecians. Still, perhaps, they will insist, that it can answer no purpose to recite a speech which has actually been spoken. There would be some truth in this objection, if one were immediately to repeat the very same performance, and to the very same audience : but if you make several additions and alterations ; if your audience is composed partly of the same, and partly of different persons, and the recital is at some distance of time, why is it less allowable to rehearse your speech than to publish it ? As to the difficulty they may suppose there would be, in giving satisfaction to an audience by the mere recital of a speech, that is a reason which concerns the particular skill and pains of the person who rehearses, but by no means holds against reciting in general. The truth is, it is not whilst I am reading, but when I am read, that I aim at approbation ; and for that reason I omit no sort of method that can render my performances more correct. In the first place,

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I frequently revise my compositions in private, afterwards I read them to two or three friends, and then give them to others to make their remarks. If after this I have any doubt concerning the justness of their observations, I carefully weigh them again with a friend or two: and, last of all, I recite them to a more numerous assembly. This is the time, believe me, when I find myself best able to exercise all the severity of the most rigid criticism; for my attention rises in proportion to my solicitude; as nothing so much awakens the judgment as that reverence, and modest timidity, which one feels upon those occasions. For do but reflect and tell me, whether you would not be infinitely less affected if you were to speak before a single person only, though ever so learned, than before a numerous assembly, even though it were composed of none but illiterate people? When you rise up to plead, are you not at that juncture, above all others, most diffident of yourself? and do you not wish, I will not say some particular parts only, but that the whole frame of your intended speech was altered? especially if the circle is large in which you are to speak; for at such a season there is something even in the most vulgar audience that strikes one with awe. And if you suspect you are not well received at the first opening of your speech, do you not find all the energy of your powers weakened, and the whole strength of your resolution sink under you? The reason I imagine to be, that there is I know not what dignity in the collective sentiments of a multitude, and though separately their judgment is, perhaps, of little weight, yet when united it becomes considerable. Agreeably to this notion, Pomponius Secundus, the famous tragic poet, whenever his friend and he differed about the retaining or rejecting any thing in his writings,

writings, used to say, I appeal * to the people ; and accordingly, by their silence or applause, adopted either his own or his friend's sentiments : such was the regard he paid to the populace ! † Whether

* There is a kind of witticism in this expression, which will be lost to the mere English reader, unless he be informed, that the Romans had a privilege confirmed to them by several laws which passed in the earlier ages of the republic, of appealing from the decisions of the magistrates, to the general assembly of the people ; and they did so in the form of words which Pomponius here applies to a different purpose.

† However unsafe, in general, an appeal to the vulgar notions may be, there are yet some cases in which their sentiments have ever been received by the judicious, as decisive. The merit of performances in the persuasive, or imitative arts, so far as the mere raising or representing the passions are concerned, will best be tried by the effect they produce in plain and unbiassed minds : for (as Tully observes) “ that artist
“ who has nature for his object, must certainly fall
“ short of the truth of his art, where nature is not
“ moved*.” The custom which prevailed among the Romans of reciting their works of genius in the porticoes, and places of public resort, took its rise, probably, from the same notion of a general and innate taste being implanted in all mankind of what is just and natural in the moving arts. It was upon this principle likewise, that the great masters in painting and statuary in ancient Greece, exhibited their performances to public view, and corrected them by the popular feelings. There is a remarkable story told of Annibal Carrache, which shews he received the same standard of merit. He took notice that a famous picture of Dominichin's representing the flagellation of St Andrew, made a very strong impression upon an old woman, who at the same time seemed little affected with another picture of a martyrdom

* De orat. lib. 1.

done

ther with justice or not, it does not concern me to determine, as I never recite my works publicly, but only before a select number of friends, whose presence I respect, and whose judgment I value; in a word, whose opinions I observe as if they were so many individuals I had separately consulted, at the same time that I stand in as much fear of them as I should of the most numerous assembly. What Cicero says of composing, will, in my opinion, hold true of that awe we have of the public: “It is the most rigid
“critic imaginable.” The very thoughts of reciting, the notion of entering an assembly, and the reverential concern when one is there; each of these circumstances tends to improve and perfect an author’s performance. Upon the whole, therefore, I cannot repent of a custom which I have experienced to be so exceedingly beneficial; and am so far from being discouraged by the trifling objections of these censors, that I beg you would point out to me if there is yet any other method of correction, that I may add to this; for nothing can sufficiently satisfy my care to render my compositions finished. I reflect what an arduous undertaking it is to resign any work into the hands of the public; and I cannot but be persuaded, that frequent revisals, and many consultations must go to the finishing of a performance, which one desires the world should universally, and for ever admire.

done by Guido, which was placed near it. A debate afterwards happening about the merit of these two performances, Carrache decided the dispute by only telling this fact. Thus, as the poet observes,

——*The people’s voice is odd,
It is, and it is not, the voice of God.*

POPE.

Epist.

Epist. XVIII. PLINY to CANINIUS.

YOU ask my advice in what manner the money you have given to our countrymen for an annual festival, may be secured after your death. Your question proceeds from a truly generous principle, but the answer to it is not very easy. Should you pay down the money to the community; there is great danger that it will be squandered away. Should you settle lands for that purpose; they will probably be neglected, as those of the public usually are. Upon the whole, then, I can think of no method more eligible than what I pursued myself in a parallel instance. Intending to give five hundred thousand sesterces for the maintenance of children who were born of good families, I made a fictitious sale to the public agent of an estate in land which was worth considerably more, who reconveyed it back to me, charged with a yearly rent of 30,000 sesterces. By this means the principal was secured to the community, at the same time the interest was certain, and the estate itself (as it was of much greater value than the rent charged upon it) was always sure of finding a tenant. I am well apprised, indeed, that by this method I have actually given more than I appear to have done, as the value of the whole estate will be a good deal lessened by the incumbrance with which it is charged. But the interest of the public ought always to take place of every private consideration, as what is eternal is to be preferred to what is mortal; and a man of true generosity will study how to render his benefaction most advantageous, rather than how he may bestow it with least expense. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XIX. PLINY to PRISCUS.

I AM extremely concerned at the illness of Fannia which she contracted during her attendance on Junia, one of the Vestal virgins. She engaged in this good office at first voluntarily, Junia being her relation; as she was afterwards appointed to it by an order from the college of priests: for these virgins, when any indisposition makes it necessary to remove them from the temple of Vesta, are always delivered to the care and custody of some venerable matron. It was her assiduity in the execution of this charge that occasioned her present disorder, which is a continual fever, attended with a cough that increases daily. She is extremely emaciated, and seems in a total decay of every thing but spirits; those indeed she preserves in their full vigour; and in a manner worthy the wife of Helvidius, and the daughter of Thrasea. In all the rest she is so greatly impaired, that I am more than apprehensive upon her account; I am deeply afflicted. I grieve, my friend, that so excellent a woman is going to be removed from the eyes of the world, which will never, perhaps, again behold her equal. How consummate is her virtue, her piety, her wisdom, her courage! She twice followed her husband into exile, and once was banished herself upon his account. For Senecio, when he was tried for writing the life of Helvidius, having said in his defence that he composed that work at the request of Fannia; Metius Carus, with a stern and threatening air, asked her whether it was true? She acknowledged it was: and when he farther questioned her, whether she supplied him likewise with materials for that purpose, and whether her mother was privy to this transaction? she boldly confessed the former, but absolutely

solutely denied the latter. In short, throughout her whole examination not a word escaped her that betrayed the least emotion of fear. On the contrary, she had the courage to preserve a copy of those very books which the senate, overawed by the tyranny of the times, had ordered to be suppressed, and at the same time the effects of the author to be confiscated; and took with her as the companions of her exile, what had been the cause of it. How pleasing is her conversation, how polite her address, and (which seldom unites in the same character) how venerable is she as well as amiable! She will hereafter, I am well persuaded, be pointed out as a model to all wives; and perhaps be esteemed worthy to be set forth as an example of fortitude even to our sex; since, while yet we have the pleasure of seeing and conversing with her, we contemplate her with the same admiration, as those heroines who are celebrated in ancient story. For myself, I confess, I cannot but tremble for this illustrious house, which seems shaken to its very foundations, and ready to fall into ruins with her: for though she will leave descendents behind her, yet what a height of virtue must they retain, what glorious actions must they perform, ere the world will be persuaded that this excellent woman was not the last of her family! It is an aggravating circumstance of affliction to me, that by her death I seem to lose a second time her mother; that worthy mother (and what can I say higher in her praise) of so amiable a person! who, as she was restored to me in her daughter, so she will now again be taken from me, and the loss of Fannia will thus pierce my heart at once with a fresh stab, and at the same time tear open a former wound. I loved and honoured them both so highly, that I knew not which had the greatest share of my esteem and affection; a point they desired might ever re-

main undetermined. In their prosperity and their adversity I did them every good office in my power, and was their comforter in exile, as well as their avenger at their return. But I have not yet paid them what I owe, and am so much the more solicitous for the recovery of this lady, that I may have time to acquit what is due from me to her. Such is the anxiety under which I write this letter! But if some friendly power should happily give me occasion to exchange it for sentiments of joy, I shall not complain of the alarms I now suffer. Farewell.

Epist. XX. PLINY to TACITUS.

I Have read your book, and with the utmost care have marked the passages which I think should be altered, and those I am of opinion ought to be expunged. It is as habitual to me to speak truth, as it is agreeable to you to hear it; and indeed none are more patient of censure, than those who have the best claim to applause. I now expect in return, your observations upon the treatise of mine which I sent you. How agreeable, how noble is such a commerce! and how am I pleased with the thought, that posterity, if it shall at all concern itself with us, will not cease to mention with what harmony, what freedom, what fidelity we lived together! It will be an instance as remarkable as it is uncommon, that two persons nearly of the same age and rank, and of some character in the republic of letters, (for since I join myself with you, I am obliged to speak of your merit with reserve), should thus mutually assist and promote each other's studies. When I was a very young man, and you in the prime of your glory and reputation, I endeavoured to follow your steps, and was desirous to be considered as next in character to you.

But next with many a length between !

And though there were, at that time, many celebrated geniuses in Rome, yet you, of all others, appeared to me, not only most worthy to be my model, but, from a similitude of our dispositions, most easy to my imitation. It is particularly agreeable to me therefore to find, that in all companies where learning is the topic of conversation, we are always mentioned together, and that my name immediately follows yours. It is true, there are some who prefer you to me, as others, on the contrary, give me the advantage ; but I am little solicitous in what order we are placed, so that we stand united ; for, in my estimation, whoever is next to you must be before every body else. You even see * in wills (unless in the case of particular friendship to either of us) we are always equally considered, and that the legacies bequeathed to us are generally the same, both in number and value. Since therefore we are thus closely linked together by a similitude of

* It was the peculiar custom of Rome, for the clients and dependents of families, to bequeath at their death to their patrons some considerable part of their estates, as the most effectual testimony of their respect and gratitude ; and the more a man received in this way, the more it redounded to his credit. Thus Cicero mentions it to the honour of Lucullus, that, while he governed Asia as proconsul, many great estates were left to him by will. And Nepos tells us, in praise of Atticus, that he succeeded to many inheritances of the same kind, bequeathed to him on no other account, than of his friendly and amiable temper. Cicero, when he was falsely reproached by Antony, with being neglected on these occasions, declared in his reply, that he had gained from this single article, about two hundred thousand pounds. *Middleton's life of Tully*, v. 2. 514.

studies,

studies, manners, reputation, and even by those last instances of human judgment, should it not mutually tend to inflame us with the most ardent affection? Farewell.

Epist. XXI. PLINY to CORNUTUS.

I Obey, my dearest colleague, and consult the weakness of my eyes, as you injoin me. For I came hither in a covered litter, in which I was as much sheltered as if I had been in my chamber. I forbear too (with difficulty indeed, however I do forbear) as well writing as reading, and study only with my ears. By drawing the curtains of my chamber, I make it gloomy, but not dark; and when I walk in my covered portico, I shut the lower range of windows, and by that means enjoy as much shade as light. Thus I endeavour to accustom myself to the light by degrees. The bath being of service in this case, I allow myself the use of it, as I do of wine, because it is not judged prejudicial; but I take it with great moderation. I do so, you know, at all times, but particularly now that I have * one who narrowly observes me.—I received the pullet, with great pleasure as coming from you, and weak as my eyes still are, they are strong enough however to discern it is extremely fat. Farewell.

Epist. XXII. PLINY to FALCO.

YOU will be less surpris'd, that I have so importunately press'd you to confer the tribuneship upon my friend, when you shall be inform'd who and what he is. As you have promised to support his interest, I may now venture to acquaint you with his name and character. It is Cornelius Minutianus, who both in rank and

* Meaning his wife, perhaps, or his physician.

virtue is the ornament of that province to which I owe my birth. His family and fortune are noble, and yet he pursues his studies with as much application, as if the necessity of his circumstances required it. He is a most upright judge, a most strenuous advocate, a most faithful friend. You will look upon the obligation as done to yourself, when you shall have an opportunity of taking a nearer view of this excellent person, who (not to speak in too lofty terms of so modest a man) is equal to all the honours and titles that can be conferred upon him. Farewell.

Epist. XIII. PLINY to FABATUS *.

I Greatly rejoice that you are so strong, as to be able to take a journey to Mediolanum, in order to meet Tiro: but that you may continue to enjoy that happiness, let me beg of you to spare yourself a fatigue so improper for a man of your years. I must insist then, that you wait for him at Comum, and that you do not stir out of your own house, nor even out of your chamber to receive him. As I love him with the affection of a brother, it would be unreasonable he should expect from the person whom I honour as my parent, a point of ceremony which he would not require of his own. Farewell.

Epist. XXIV. PLINY to GEMINIUS.

N Umidia Quadratilla is dead at almost fourscore years of age; fresh and hale till her last sickness, and of a strength and firmness of body unusual to persons of her sex. She has left a very prudent will, having disposed of two thirds of her estate to her grandson, and the rest to her grand-daughter. The young lady I know little

* His wife's grandfather.

of, but the grandson is one of the most favourite and intimate friends I have. He is a person of singular worth, whose merit entitles him to the affection of a relation, even where his blood does not. Though he is extremely beautiful, he escaped every malicious imputation both whilst a boy and when a youth: he was a husband at four and twenty, and would have been a father if providence had not disappointed his hopes. He lived in the family with his grandmother, who was exceedingly devoted to the pleasures of the town, with great severity of conduct, yet at the same time with the utmost compliance. She retained a set of pantomimes, and was an encourager of this sort of people to a degree inconsistent with a person of her sex and rank. But Quadratus never appeared at these entertainments, not only when she exhibited them in the theatre, but even in her own house; nor indeed did she expect he should. I once heard her say, when she was recommending the studies of her grandson to my inspection, that it was her custom, in order to pass away some of those unemployed hours with which female life abounds, to amuse herself with playing at chess, or seeing the mimicry of her pantomimes; but that whenever she engaged either in the one or the other, she constantly sent away her grandson to his studies: a custom, I imagine, which she observed as much out of a certain reverence, as affection, to the youth. I was a good deal surprised, as I am persuaded you will be, at what he told me the last time the Pontifical * games were exhibited. As we were coming out of the theatre together, where we had been entertained with a shew of

* The priests, as well as other magistrates, exhibited public games to the people when they entered upon their office.

these pantomimes, *Do you know*, said he, *this is the first time I ever saw Quadratilla's freedman dance?* Such is the character of her grandson! while a set of men of a far different stamp, in order to do honour to Quadratilla, (I am ashamed to employ that word to what, in truth, was but the lowest and grossest flattery), were running up and down the theatre, pretending to be struck with the utmost admiration and rapture at the performances of those pantomimes, and then mimicking all their gesticulations and repeating the songs, in order to pay court to the lady patroness of this company. But now all that these theatrical flatterers have got in return, is only a few trifling legacies, which they have the mortification to receive from an heir, who was never so much as present at Quadratilla's shews. — I send you this account, as knowing it is not disagreeable to you to hear the news of the town, and because when any occurrence has given me pleasure, I love to renew it again by relating it. And indeed this instance of affection in Quadratilla, and the honour done therein to that excellent youth her grandson, has afforded me a very sensible satisfaction; as I extremely rejoice that the house which once belonged to Cassius, the founder and chief of the * Cassian school, is come into the possession of a person not less considerable than its former master. For be assured, my friend will fill it as he ought, and its ancient lustre will again revive under Quadratus, who, I am persuaded, will prove as eminent an orator, as Cassius was a lawyer. Farewell.

* A famous lawyer who flourished in the reign of the emperor Claudius: those who followed his opinion were said to be Cassiani, or of the school of Cassius.

Epist. XXV. PLINY to RUFUS.

ALas! what a number of learned men does modesty conceal, or love of ease withdraw from the notice of the world! and yet when we are going to speak or recite in public, it is the judgment only of ostentatious talents which we stand in awe of: whereas, in truth, those who silently cultivate the sciences have so much a higher claim to regard, as they pay a calm veneration to whatever is great in works of genius: an observation which I give you upon experience. Terentius Junior having passed through the military offices suitable to a person of equestrian rank, and executed with great integrity the post of receiver-general of the revenues in Narbonensian Gaul, retired to his estate, preferring the enjoyment of an uninterrupted tranquillity, to those honours which his services had merited. He invited me lately to his house, where, looking upon him only as a worthy master of a family, and an industrious farmer, I started such topics of conversation in which I imagined he was most versed. But he soon turned the discourse, and, with a great fund of knowledge, entered upon points of literature. With what elegance did he express himself in Latin and Greek! for he is so perfectly well skilled in both, that which ever he uses, seems to be the language wherein he particularly excels. How extensive is his reading! how tenacious his memory! You would not imagine him the inhabitant of a country-village, but of polite Athens herself. In short, his conversation has increased my solicitude concerning my works, and taught me to fear the judgment of these retired country-gentlemen, as much as those of more known and conspicuous learning. And let me persuade
you

you to consider them in the same light: for believe me, upon a careful observation, you will often find, in the literary as well as military world, most formidable abilities concealed under a very unpromising appearance. Farewell.

Epist. XXVI. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

THE lingering illness of a particular friend lately taught me, that we are always most virtuous in sickness. Where is the man, who, under the pain of any distemper, is either solicited by avarice or inflamed with lust? At such a season he is neither a slave of love, nor the fool of ambition; he looks with indifference upon the charms of wealth, and is contented with ever so small a portion of it, as being upon the point of leaving even that little. It is then he recollects there are gods, and that he himself is but a man: no mortal is then the object of his envy, his admiration, or his contempt; and the reports of slander neither raise his attention, nor feed his curiosity: his imagination is wholly employed * upon baths and fountains. These are the subjects of his cares and wishes, while he resolves, if he should recover, to pass the remainder of his days in ease and tranquillity, that is, in innocence and happiness. I may therefore lay down to you and myself a short rule, which the philosophers have endeavoured to inculcate at the expense of many words, and even many volumes; that “we should practise in health, those resolutions we form in sickness.” Farewell.

* It is probable that fevers were the peculiar distemper of Rome, as Pliny in his general allusions to disorders of the body, seems always to consider them of the inflammatory kind.

Epist.

Epist. XXVII. PLINY to SURA.

OUR present recess from business gives you an opportunity to teach, and me to learn from you. I would therefore willingly know your sentiments concerning spectres, whether you believe they have a real form, and are a sort of divinities, or only the false impressions of a terrified imagination? What particularly inclines me to give credit to their existence, is a story which I heard of Curtius Rufus. When he was in low circumstances and unknown in the world, he attended the governor of Africa into that province. One evening as he was walking in the public portico, he was extremely surprised with the figure of a woman which appeared to him, of a size and beauty more than human. She told him she was the tutelar power that presided over Africa, and was come to inform him of the future events of his life: that he should go back to Rome, where he should be raised to the highest honours, and return to that province invested with the proconsular dignity, and there should die. Accordingly every circumstance of this prophecy was actually accomplished. It is said farther, that upon his arrival at Carthage, as he was coming out of the ship, the same figure accosted him upon the shore. It is certain, at least, that being seized with a fit of illness, though there were no symptoms in his case that led his attendants to despair, he instantly gave up all hope of recovery; judging, it should seem, of the truth of the future part of the prediction, by that which had already been fulfilled, and of the misfortune which threatened him, by the success which he had experienced. To this story let me add another as remarkable as the former, but attended with circumstances of great horror; which

I will give you exactly as it was related to me. There was at Athens a large and spacious house, which lay under the disrepute of being haunted. In the dead of the night a noise, resembling the clashing of iron was frequently heard, which, if you listened more attentively, sounded like the rattling of chains; at first it seemed at a distance, but approached nearer by degrees: immediately afterward a spectre appeared in the form of an old man, extremely meagre and ghastly, with a long beard and dishevelled hair, rattling the chains on his feet and hands. The poor inhabitants in the mean while passed their nights under the most dreadful terrors imaginable. This, as it broke their rest, ruined their health, and threw them into distempers, which, together with their horrors of mind, proved in the end fatal to their lives. Even in the day-time, though the spirit did not appear, yet the remembrance of it made such a strong impression upon their imaginations, that it still seemed before their eyes, and continually alarmed them, though it was no longer present. By this means the house was at last deserted, as being judged by every body to be absolutely uninhabitable; so that it was now entirely abandoned to the ghost. However, in hopes that some tenant might be found who was ignorant of this great calamity which attended it, a bill was put up, giving notice, that it was either to be let or sold. It happened that Athenodorus the philosopher came to Athens at this time, and reading the bill, inquired the price. The extraordinary cheapness raised his suspicion; nevertheless, when he heard the whole story, he was so far from being discouraged, that he was more strongly inclined to hire it, and, in short, actually did so. When it grew towards evening, he ordered a couch to be prepared for him in the forepart of the house, and after calling for a light,

light, together with his pen and tablets, he directed all his people to retire. But that his mind might not, for want of employment, be open to the vain terrors of imaginary noises and spirits, he applied himself to writing with the utmost attention. The first part of the night passed with usual silence, when at length the chains began to rattle: however, he neither lifted up his eyes, nor laid down his pen, but diverted his observations by pursuing his studies with greater earnestness. The noise increased and advanced nearer, till it seemed at the door, and at last in the chamber. He looked up and saw the ghost exactly in the manner it had been described to him: it stood before him, beckoning with the finger. Athenodorus made a sign with his hand that it should wait a little, and threw his eyes again upon his papers, but the ghost still rattling his chains in his ears, he looked up and saw him beckoning as before. Upon this he immediately arose, and with the light in his hand, followed it. The ghost slowly stalked along, as if encumbered with his chains, and turning into the area of the house, suddenly vanished. Athenodorus being thus deserted, made a mark with some grass and leaves where the spirit left him. The next day he gave information of this to the magistrates, and advised them to order that spot to be dug up. This was accordingly done, and the skeleton of a man in chains was there found; for the body having lain a considerable time in the ground was putrefied and mouldered away from the fetters. The bones being collected together were publicly buried, and thus after the ghost was appeased by the proper ceremonies, the house was haunted no more. This story I believe upon the credit of others; what I am going to mention I give you upon my own. I have a freedman, named Marcus, who is by no means illiterate.

illiterate. One * night as he and his younger brother were lying together, he fancied he saw somebody upon his bed, who took out a pair of scissars, and cut off the hair from the top part of his head; and in the morning, it appeared the boy's hair was actually cut, and the clippings lay scattered about the floor. A short time after this, an event of the like nature contributed to give credit to the former story. A young lad of my family was sleeping in his apartment with the rest of his companions, when two persons clad in white came in (as he tells the story) through the windows, and cut off his hair as he lay, and as soon as they had finished the operation, returned the same way they entered. The next morning it was found that this boy had been served just as the other, and with the very same circumstance of the hair spread about the room. Nothing remarkable indeed followed these events, unless that I escaped a prosecution, in which, if Domitian (during whose reign this happened) had lived some time longer, I should certainly have

* Those who are unacquainted with the genius of the ancient Romans, may be inclined to think meanly of our author's judgment, from this and the following story; but when it is remembered that the greatest characters which we meet with among that illustrious people, are all strongly marked with a vein of superstition, no particular charge of weak credulity can with justice be brought from hence against Pliny. The truth is, it was a national turn, and countenanced by the constitution of their government, in so much that omens, even of the lowest kind, were considered previous to every step either of foreign or domestic concern: and the wisest and gravest of their historians, the judicious Livy not excepted, have given into accounts of this nature. Even a noble historian in England has not scrupled to insert a relation of the same kind and credibility, in his history of the civil wars.

been

been involved. For, after the death of that emperor, articles of impeachment against me were found in his scrutoire, which had been exhibited by Carus. It may therefore be conjectured, since it is customary for persons under any public accusation to let their hair grow, this cutting off the hair of my servants was a sign I should escape the imminent danger that threatened me. Let me desire you then maturely to consider this question. The subject merits your examination; as, I trust, I am not myself altogether unworthy to participate of the abundance of your superior knowledge. And though you should, with your usual scepticism, balance between two opinions, yet I hope you will throw the weightier reasons on one side, lest, whilst I consult you in order to have my doubts settled, you should dismiss me in the same suspense and uncertainty that occasioned this application. Farewell.

Epist. XXVIII. PLINY to SEPTITIUS.

YOU say that certain persons have condemned me to you, as being upon all occasions too prodigal in commendation of my friends. I acknowledge the charge, and glory in it too. For what is more honourable than the error of an excess of benevolence! But still, who are these, let me ask, that are better acquainted with my friends than I am myself? Yet grant there are any such, why will they deny me so pleasing a mistake? For supposing my friends deserve not the high encomiums I give them, certainly I am happy in believing they do. Let them recommend then this ungenerous strictness to those (and their number is not inconsiderable) who imagine they shew their judgment, when they indulge their censure. As for myself, they will never be

able to persuade me I can be guilty of an excess in friendship. Farewell.

Epist. XXIX. PLINY to MONTANUS.

YOU will laugh, and then you will be provoked to anger ; then again you will laugh, if you read what you will scarce give credit to without reading. I lately observed in the Tiburtine road, near the first-mile stone, a monument erected to the memory of * Pallas, with the following inscription: THE SENATE DECREED TO HIM, AS A REWARD FOR HIS FIDELITY AND AFFECTION TO HIS PATRONS, THE HONOUR OF THE PRÆTORIAN ORNAMENTS, TOGETHER WITH THE SUM OF FIFTEEN MILLION OF SESTERCES ; BUT HE WAS CONTENTED WITH ACCEPTING ONLY THE HONOUR. I am not indeed apt to wonder at distinctions of this sort, which oftener proceed from fortune than judgment ; but I could not help reflecting when I read this inscription, how empty and ridiculous are those honours, which are thus sometimes thrown away upon dirt and infamy ; which such a rascal, in short, had the assurance both to accept and to refuse, and then set himself forth to posterity as an example of singular moderation ! Yet why should it raise my indignation ? rather let me treat it as a matter to be laughed at, that persons of this character may not flatter themselves they have obtained any thing very considerable, when their success only exposes them to ridicule. Farewell.

* He was at first a slave in the court of Claudius Caesar, who afterwards gave him his freedom, and raised him to his chief favour. The patrons mentioned in this inscription, are that emperor and his consort Agrippina, to whom Pallas had likewise recommended himself by some signal services.

Epist.

Epist. XXX. PLINY to GENITOR.

I AM greatly troubled to find, as you write me, that you have lost a pupil, a youth of the greatest hopes, by whose sickness and death, I need not be informed, that your studies must have been interrupted; since you are the strictest observer of all the duties of life, and since your affection is unlimited to all those to whom you give your esteem. As for myself, business pursues me even hither, and I am not out of the reach of people who oblige me to act either as their judge, or their arbitrator. To this I must add, not only the continual complaints of the farmers, who claim a sort of prescription to try my patience as they please; but the necessity of letting out my farms: an affair which gives me much trouble, as it is exceedingly difficult to find out proper tenants. For these reasons I can only study by snatches; still however I study. I sometimes read, and sometimes I compose; but my reading teaches me, by a very mortifying comparison, with what ill success I attempt to be an author myself. Though indeed you give me great encouragement, when you compare the piece I wrote in vindication of Helvidius, to the oration of Demosthenes against Midias. I confess I had that harangue in my view when I composed mine; not that I pretend to rival it, (that would be an absurd and mad attempt indeed), but I endeavoured, I own, to imitate it, as far as the difference of our subjects would admit, and as nearly as a genius of the lowest rank can copy one of the highest. Farewell.

Epist. XXXI. PLINY to CORNUTUS.

CLAUDIUS Pollio desires your friendship. I think him worthy of it, not only for that

reason, but because he gives you his ; as few ever require the one, without returning the other. He is an upright, honest, good-natured man, and modest, I had almost said, beyond measure ; if indeed it is possible to be so. We served in the army together, where he commanded a troop of horse, and I had an opportunity of taking a nearer view of his character, than merely what his being my fellow-officer gave me. I was appointed by the lieutenant-general to examine the accounts of the several companies, and as I discovered many instances of gross avarice and neglect of duty in some, so I found the highest integrity and exactest care in him. He was afterwards promoted to very considerable employments in the management of the revenue, yet no temptations could turn aside the innate bias of his soul from honesty, no prosperity swell his breast, but he preserved, in all the variety of posts through which he passed, an unbroken reputation of humanity ; as he supported the toils of business with the same fortitude of mind he now discovers in his retreat. He once indeed quitted his retirement for a short time, with great applause, being called by my worthy friend Corellius to his assistance, in purchasing and dividing out those lands which were given by the liberality of the emperor * Nerva. And could there be any thing more to his honour, than to be thus particularly singled out from so many others, by a person of so eminent a character ? You may judge how faithfully he reveres the sacred ties of friendship, by casting your eyes upon the last wills of several of his friends, particularly that of

* Nerva restored to the Romans all that Domitian had plundered them of, and gave a very large sum of money to be laid out in the purchase of lands for the support of decayed families.

Mufonius

Mufonius Bassus, a person of distinguished sense. Pollio (as he cultivates eloquence as well as every other valuable endowment) has very gratefully endeavoured to perpetuate and extend the memory of Bassus, by publishing an account of his life; a circumstance too uncommon, as well as too generous, not to be applauded, since the generality of the world seldom mention the dead, unless to revile them. Receive then this worthy man, greatly desirous (believe me) of your friendship, with the embraces of the warmest affection, and even invite him to accept of it as what you owe him; for he who makes the first amicable advances, cannot so properly be said to merit a favour, as a reward. Farewell.

Epist. XXXII. PLINY to FABATUS.

I AM much pleased that the arrival of my friend Tiro was agreeable to you. But I am chiefly overjoyed that you made use (as your letter informs me) of the opportunity which the presence of the proconsul afforded you, of manumitting several of your slaves. For as I wish to see our country improved by every possible method, so particularly by an increase of citizens, as that of all others is the strongest ornament a community can receive. I am pleased too (not out of a spirit of vanity, however I confess I am pleased) with what you farther add, that both you and I were highly extolled, in the acknowledgments which were made upon this occasion; for, as Xenophon observes, “the voice of praise is sweet;” especially when we think we deserve it. Farewell.

Epist. XXXIII. PLINY to TACITUS.

I Presage (and I flatter myself I shall not be deceived) that your histories will be immortal.

I ingenuously own therefore *, I so much the more earnestly wish to find a place in them. If we are generally careful to have our faces taken by

* As some ingenious writers have affected to draw a comparison between our author and Cicero, to the disadvantage of the former; it will not, it is hoped, be thought improper to set before the reader an instance, where Pliny greatly outshines that noble example he was, upon all occasions, so desirous of copying. There is a letter of Cicero's extant, to the same purpose as this of Pliny's, addressed to his friend Luceius *, who was writing the history of his own times. The agreeable Montaign condemns them both as instances of immoderate ambition; and observes, that "fortune, as it were, in pure spite, has
" taken care to hand down to us the vanity of these
" requests, while she has long since destroyed the
" histories they solicited." Let it be remarked, however, in justice to our author, that, upon a comparison of the two letters, the ambition of Pliny will appear far more reasonable than that of Cicero; for the latter does not scruple to press his friend to transgress the rules of history, and break through the bounds of truth in his favour: *Te plane etiam atque etiam rogo, ut et ornas ea vehementius etiam quam fortasse sentis, et in ea leges historię negligas, amerieque nostro plusculum etiam quam concedit veritas largire:* whereas Pliny, with a far nobler spirit, expressly declares he does not desire Tacitus should heighten the fact, and that actions of real worth need only to be set in their true light. In Cicero's letter we read the extravagant dictates of the most immoderate ambition; and he himself confesses he had not the assurance to look his friend in the face while he proposed them: *Coram me tecum eadem hæc agere sæpe conantem deterruit pudor:* in Pliny's we see nothing but what is agreeable to cool sense, and the honest ambition of one who was conscious he had acted well, and desirous posterity should know it.

* Ep. fam. l. 5. 12.

the best artists, ought we not to desire that our actions may be celebrated by an author of your distinguished character? in view to this, I acquaint you with the following affair, which though it cannot have escaped your attention, as it is mentioned in the journals of the public, still I acquaint you with it, that you may be more sensible how agreeable it will be to me, that this action, greatly heightened by the hazard which attended it, should receive an additional lustre from the testimony of so bright a genius. The senate appointed Herennius Senecio and myself counsel for the province of Boëtica, in their prosecution of Bœbius Massa. He was condemned, and the house ordered his effects to be seized into the hands of the public officer. Shortly after, Senecio, having learned that the consuls intended to sit to hear petitions, came to me, and proposed that we should go together, and address them with the same unanimity we executed the office which had been enjoined us, that they would not suffer Massa's effects to be dissipated by those who were appointed to preserve them. I answered, that as we had been counsel in this cause by order of the senate, I would recommend it to his consideration, whether it would be proper for us, after sentence had passed, to intermeddle any farther. "You are at liberty," said he, "to prescribe what bounds you please to yourself, who have no particular connections with the province, except what arise from your late services to them; but it is not so with me, who was born there, and enjoyed the post of quæstor among them." If such, I told him, was his determined resolution, I was ready to attend him, that whatever resentment should be the consequence of this affair, it might not fall singly upon himself. Accordingly we went to the consuls, where Senecio spoke what he thought proper

per upon the occasion, to which I subjoined a few words on my part. We had scarce ended, when Massa, complaining that Senecio had not acted against him with the fidelity of an advocate, but the bitterness of an enemy, desired he might be at liberty to prosecute him for treason. The whole assembly was struck with the utmost consternation and horror at this motion. I immediately rose up: "Most noble consuls," said I, "I am afraid it should seem that Massa has tacitly charged me with having favoured him in this cause, since he did not think proper to join me in the desired prosecution." This short speech was extremely well received by those who were present; as it soon afterwards got air, and was mentioned by every body with general applause. The late emperor Nerva, (who though at that time in a private station, yet gave attention to every worthy action which passed in public) wrote a letter to me upon the occasion with great good sense, wherein he not only congratulated me, but the age, which had produced an example so much in the spirit (as he was pleased to call it) of the ancients. But, whatever it be, it is in your power to heighten and spread the lustre of it: though far am I from desiring you would in the least exceed the bounds of reality. History ought to be guided by strict truth, and worthy actions require nothing more. Farewell.

B O O K VIII.

Epist. I. PLINY to SEPTITIUS.

I Performed my journey happily, excepting that some of my servants contracted an indisposition by the excessive heats. Poor Encolpius, my * reader, whose assistance is of such service to me in my studies and amusements, was so affected with the dust, that it occasioned his spitting of blood: an accident which will prove as unfortunate to me, as to himself, should he be thereby rendered unfit for those purposes of literature in which he so greatly excels. If that should unhappily be the event, where shall I find one who will read my works with so much spirit and harmony, or admire them with so much fondness? But the gods seem to favour our better hopes, as his bleeding is stopped, and his pain abated. He is himself extremely temperate; as no care or concern is wanting either on our parts or his physician's. This, with the wholesomeness of the air, and the quiet of retirement, gives us reason to expect, that the country will contribute as much to his health, as to his repose. Farewell.

Epist. II. PLINY to CALVISIUS.

O Ther people go to their estates in order to gain money; whilst I go to mine only to return so much the poorer. I had sold my vintage to the merchants, who were extremely ea-

* Persons of rank and literature among the Romans, retained in their families a domestic, whose sole business was to read to them.

ger to purchase it, encouraged by the price it then bore, and what it was probable it would rise to: however, they were disappointed in their expectations. Upon this occasion to have made the same general abatement to all, would have been much the easiest, though not so equitable a method. But justice, according to my estimate, is the noblest of all virtues, and to be pursued in one's domestic as well as public conduct; in minute, as in great affairs; and in our own, as well as in the concerns of others. And if every deviation from rectitude is equally * criminal, every approach to it must be equally laudable. In the first place then, I remitted to all in general one eighth part of the price they had agreed to give me, that none might go away without a mark of my liberality: in the next, I particularly considered those who having advanced large sums towards their purchase, and done me so much the more service, and had been greater sufferers themselves. To those therefore, who bought of me to the value of more than ten thousand sesterces, I gave back (over and beside that which I may call the general and common eighth) a tenth part of what they had paid above that sum. I do not know whether I express myself clearly enough; I will endeavour to explain my meaning more fully: for instance, suppose a man had purchased of me to the value of fifteen thousand sesterces, I remitted to him one eighth part of that whole sum, and likewise one tenth of five thousand. Besides this, as several had deposited, in different proportions, part of the price they had agreed to pay, whilst others had advanced nothing; I thought it would not be agreeable to equity, that all these should be favoured with the

* It was a doctrine maintained by the Stoics, that all crimes are equal.

same undistinguished remission. To those therefore who had made any payments, I returned a tenth part upon each of the sums so paid. By this means I made a proper acknowledgment to each of them, according to their respective deserts; and likewise encouraged them, not only to deal with me for the future, but to be forward in their payments. This instance of my good nature or my judgment (call it which you please) was a very considerable expense to me. However, I found my account in it; for all the country greatly approved both of this uncommon piece of generosity, and the method in which I conducted it. Even those whom I did not *measure* (as they say) *by the same ell*, but distinguished according to their several degrees, thought themselves obliged to me, in proportion to the integrity of their dispositions; and went away pleased with having experienced, that not with me

* *The brave and mean an equal honour find.*
Farewell.

Epist. III. PLINY to SPARSUS.

YOU write me, that the book which I lately sent you, of all my works, is your greatest favourite. The same judgment has likewise been passed upon it by another of my very learned friends: and I am the more inclined to believe that neither of you is mistaken, not only as it is improbable you both should, but because I am much disposed to flatter myself. I would always, indeed, have my last performance appear the most finished; and for that reason prefer the speech I lately published, to that which you mention. I will send it you as soon as I can meet with a safe conveyance. And now I have raised

* Hom. II. lib. 9. ver. 319.

your

your expectations of this piece, I doubt you will be disappointed when it comes to your hands. In the mean while, however, you may expect it as something that will please you : and who knows but it may ? Farewell.

Epist. IV. PLINY to CANINIUS.

YOU cannot do better than in preparing to write a poem upon the Dacian * war : for where could you have chosen a subject so new, so full of events, so extensive, and so poetical ? a subject, which while it has all the marvellous of fiction, has all the solidity of truth. You will sing of rivers taught to flow in new channels ; of bridges thrown over immense rivers ; of encampments upon the dreadful steep of craggy mountains, and of a mighty king † superior to adversity, though forced to abandon his crown, and even his life. You will describe too the glorious victor's double triumph, one of which was the first that was ever gained over that nation, till then unsubdued, as the other will be the last. There is one difficulty however, and a very considerable one it is, where to find expressions equal to the grandeur of the subject ; a difficulty which seems almost insuperable even to your elevated genius, though capable of rising to

* Dacia comprehended part of the present kingdom of Hungary, together with part of Transilvania, Servia, Walachia, and Moldavia. It was first subdued and added to the Roman empire by Trajan, in memory of whose victories over this nation, the famous pillar is supposed to have been erected, called *Trajan's pillar*, which is still to be seen entire at Rome.

† Decebalus, king of the Dacians, who rather than fall into the hands of the conqueror, or live in dependence, put an end to his own life.

the

the most sublime subjects. Something too there will be of labour in reconciling those barbarous and uncouth names, especially that of the king himself, to the harmony of Grecian numbers. There is nothing however so hard, that art and industry cannot, at least, mitigate, if not absolutely subdue. If Homer is allowed to contract or lengthen, or change even Grecian names, which are nothing harsh to the ear, in order to make them run more smoothly in his verse; why should the same liberty be refused to you, especially since it is necessity, and not affectation, that pleads for that indulgence? Come on then, my friend, and after having, as poets are wont, invoked the gods, and among the rest, that divine hero, whose mighty deeds and deep counsels you are going to celebrate, loosen all your cordage, spread every sail, and then, if ever, launch forth with the full flow of your unbounded genius:—for you must allow me to be poetical, when I am talking to a poet. And now I insist that you send me every part, as soon as it has received your last finishing touches; and even before, while it is only a rude sketch, and yet in embryo. You will tell me, that a detached piece cannot please, like one entire design, nor an unfinished plan be as agreeable as complete performance. I am very sensible it cannot, and therefore shall consider it only as a work in its first rudiments, as a separate and disjointed member; and shall faithfully lay it up in my scrutoire, to wait your last hand. Indulge me then with this instance, above others, of your affection, that you suffer me to be privy to what you would chuse to conceal even from every body. In a word, though the more time and caution you take in communicating your works, the more, possibly, it may heighten my esteem and approbation of the poet, yet the less you use

of either upon this occasion, the more I shall certainly love and applaud the friend. Farewell.

Epist. V. PLINY to GEMINIUS.

OUR friend Macrinus has received a heavy wound. He has lost his wife! a lady whose uncommon virtues would have rendered her an ornament even to ancient times. He lived with her thirty-nine years in the most uninterrupted harmony. How respectful was her behaviour to him! and how did she herself deserve the highest veneration, as she blended and united in her character, all those amiable virtues that adorn and distinguish the different periods of female life! It should, methinks, afford great consolation to Macrinus, that he has thus long enjoyed so exquisite a blessing. But that reflection seems only so much the more to imbitter his loss; as indeed the pain of parting with our happiness, still rises in proportion to the length of its continuance. I cannot therefore but be greatly anxious for so valuable a friend, till this wound to his peace shall be in a condition to admit of proper applications. Time however, together with the necessity of the thing, and even a satiety of grief itself, will best effect his cure. Farewell.

Epist. VI. PLINY to MONTANUS.

YOU must already have known by my last letter, that I observed lately upon a monument erected to the memory of Pallas, the following inscription *: *The senate decreed to him, as a reward for his fidelity and affection to his patrons, the honour of the Prætorian ornaments, together with the sum of fifteen millions of sesterces: but he was contented with accepting only the honour.* I after-

* See book 7. let. 29.

wards thought it worth while to search for this decree, and found it ran in a strain so very extravagant, that this proud inscription seems modest and humble to it. The elogiums which have been given to the most illustrious Romans, I do not say those of more remote antiquity, as the Scipios and the Mummii; but (to come nearer our own times) the Marii, the Syllas, and the Pompeys, fall infinitely short of those which have been lavished upon Pallas. Was it a spirit of banter, shall I suppose, or a principle of slavery that produced this decree? I would ascribe it to the former, were not raillery unbecoming the dignity of the senate. Must it be attributed then to the most abject subjection? Yet who is so wretchedly sunk as to submit to such meanness! Or was it the lust of ambition that gave birth to this decree, and the author, perhaps, proposed it with a view of paving the way to his own advancement? But whom can we suppose so mad as to desire to raise himself at the expense both of his own and the public honour, and that in a community where to be first in rank was only to be first in flattery of Pallas? Not to mention their offering to a slave the Prætorian honours; they were slaves themselves who did so: to pass by that part of their decree, where they say that Pallas ought not only to be entreated, but compelled to wear the * golden ring: no doubt it was not consistent with the dignity of the senate, that a person of Prætorian rank should wear an iron one: not to take notice, I say, of these slighter instances, let us observe the following very extraordinary clause: *The senate*. (and was it not purified after so vile a pollution?) *the*

* None but knights and senators had the privilege of wearing a gold ring; as an iron one was a badge of servitude.

senate returns thanks to Claudius, not only for the honourable mention he himself was pleased to make of Pallas, but for the opportunity afforded the house of testifying their good will towards him. It was highly to the credit, no doubt, of the senate, not to appear deficient in point of gratitude to Pallas ! It goes on : That Pallas, to whom every man, according to his abilities, acknowledges his obligations, may receive the just reward of his fidelity and singular services. Would one not imagine that he had extended the bounds of the empire, or, at least, preserved the armies of the state ? But it proceeds : since no occasion more agreeable could present itself to the senate and the Roman people, of exercising their liberality, than an opportunity of rewarding one who had proved himself so honest and disinterested a guardian of the emperor's finances.—Such was the glorious ambition of the senate at that time ; such the highest pleasure of the people ; such the most agreeable occasion of exercising their liberality, to have an opportunity of exhausting the public treasures upon Pallas ! It follows ; the senate therefore voted that fifteen millions of sesterces should be paid him out of the treasury, and, as he has a soul far above desires of this kind, that the emperor should be so much the more strongly entreated to use his authority with Pallas, to oblige him to comply with the inclination of the senate. Nothing more indeed seemed wanting to complete this extraordinary scene, than that the imperial authority should interpose ; that Pallas should be pressed to yield to the senate ; that Cæsar himself should be called in to oppose this insolent piece of self-denial, lest the humble Pallas should refuse fifteen millions of sesterces ! He refused, nevertheless, the offer the public made him of this immense sum ; the only thing he could possibly have done more arrogant than accepting it. Yet even this the senate applauded, and seems to lament in the following clause.

clause. *But whereas our excellent prince and father of his country has, at the instance of Pallas, expressed his desire to have that part of the vote remitted which relates to the giving him fifteen millions of sesterces out of the treasury, the senate declares, that it was with much willingness and great justice they voted, amongst other honours, the said intended sum to Pallas, upon account of his fidelity and vigilance: however, in compliance with the emperor's inclination, which they think cannot without impiety be opposed in any instance, they obey it even in this.* Figure to yourself Pallas entering his protest, as it were, against the decree of the senate; moderating the honours which were offered him, and refusing, as something much more valuable, the fifteen millions, when at the same time he accepted the Prætorian ornaments, as a present of an inferior nature. Represent to yourself Cæsar yielding to the entreaties of his freedman in the face of the senate, or rather indeed, obeying his commands; for in such a case, to propose, is to command. Imagine the senate declaring in every clause of this decree, that it was with great willingness and justice the house intended, among other honours, to present Pallas with this sum; and that it would have persisted in doing so, but for the inclination of the emperor, which it was impious in any point to oppose! Was it owing then only to the obsequiousness of the senate, and the modesty of Pallas, that he did not carry off fifteen millions out of the treasury? And was it in this instance, of all others, that they would have made an exception to their obedience, if they had thought it right to have done so in any? And now, after all this, you will imagine perhaps, that you are got to the end. Have patience however, there is still something more remarkable behind: *And whereas it is highly expedient, that the generous disposition of the emperor to approve*

and reward merit, should be every where made known and celebrated, especially in such places where those who have the care and administration of his affairs, may be excited to an imitation; and whereas the approved fidelity and integrity of Pallas may stir up others to endeavour at so laudable an emulation:—

*It is therefore resolved, that the memorial which the emperor read to the senate on the 28th of January last, together with the decree of the senate thereupon, shall be engraven in tablets of brass, and hung up near the martial statue of * Julius Cæsar. It was not, it seems, sufficient that the senate alone should be witness to this complicated disgrace; but the most frequented place in all Rome was chosen, in order to display it to that and future ages: it was decreed, that all the honours of a most insolent slave, both those which he refused, and those which, as much as in the authors of the decree lay, he had borne, should be inscribed in brass: the Prætorian honours decreed to Pallas were inscribed, like ancient treaties or sacred laws, upon public and everlasting monuments of brass! so great was their—I know not what name to give it—that the emperor chose to display his weakness, the senate its meanness, and Pallas his insolence in the face of all the world! The senate was not ashamed to palliate this turpitude with the shew of reason; and a noble one, in truth, it was, even *that others might be encouraged by the rewards conferred upon Pallas, to a laudable emulation of his conduct!* Thus contemptible were all honours rendered, even those which the noble Pallas did not disdain to accept! And yet there were found persons of rank and birth, who were so humble as to desire and solicit those very honours, which they thus saw conferred upon a freedman, and offered by slaves. Happy for me that I was not born in those times,*

* In the Forum.

which

which I cannot help blushing for, as if I had actually lived in them! and I doubt not, they raise the same sentiments in you. I know the honest warmth of your temper, and am persuaded, though I may perhaps, in some places, have been transported into a higher strain of expression, than is suitable to the epistolary style, you will rather think I have shewn too little, than too much indignation. Farewell.

Epist. VII. PLINY to TACITUS.

YOU have sent me your treatise, not as if it were sent from one master to another, or from one scholar to another, (as you are pleased to write me), but with the condescension of a preceptor to his pupil; for in that relation I must consider myself to you. Accordingly you summon me to my studies, whilst I am playing the truant, and prolonging the Saturnalian holidays.—Tell me now, could I have made you a more stiff and awkward compliment, or given a stronger proof, that I am so far from deserving to be your instructor, that I am not even worthy to be your pupil? However, I will take upon myself the character you have invested me with, and exert the authority you have given me over your book; and with so much the more freedom, as I have nothing to send you of my own in return, upon which you may take your revenge. Farewell.

Epist. VIII. PLINY to ROMANUS.

HAve you seen the source of the river * Clitumnus? As I never heard you mention

* Now called Clitumno: it rises a little below the village of Campello in Umbria. The inhabitants near this

tion it, I imagine not; let me therefore advise you to do so immediately. It is but lately indeed I had that pleasure, and I condemn myself for not having seen it sooner. At the foot of a little hill, covered with venerable and shady cypress-trees, a spring issues out, which gushing in different and unequal streams, forms itself, after several windings, into a spacious basin, so extremely clear, that you may see the pebbles, and the little pieces of money which are * thrown into it, as they lie at the bottom. From thence it is carried off not so much by the declivity of the ground, as by its own strength and fulness. It is navigable almost as soon as it has quitted its source, and wide enough to admit a free passage for vessels to pass by each other, as they sail with or against the stream. The current runs so strong, though the ground is level, that the large barges which go down the river have no occasion to make use of their oars; while those which ascend, find it difficult to advance, even with the assistance of oars and poles: and this vicissitude of labour and ease, is exceedingly amusing when one sails up and down merely for pleasure. The banks on each

this river still retain a notion, that its waters are attended with a supernatural property, imagining it makes the cattle white that drink of it: a quality for which it is likewise celebrated by many of the Latin poets. See Addison's travels.

* The heads of considerable rivers, hot springs, large bodies of standing water, &c. were esteemed holy among the Romans, and cultivated with religious ceremonies. It was customary to throw little pieces of money into those fountains, lakes, &c. which had the reputation of being sacred, as a mark of veneration for those places, and to render the presiding deities propitious. Suetonius mentions this practice, in the annual vows which he says the Roman people made for the health of Augustus. *Suet. in vit. Aug.*
side

side are shaded with the verdure of great numbers of ash and poplar trees, as clearly and distinctly seen in the stream, as if they were actually sunk in it. The water is cold as snow, and ~~as~~ white too. Near it stands an ancient and venerable temple, wherein is placed the river-god Clitumnus clothed in a robe, whose immediate presence the prophetic oracles here delivered, sufficiently testify. Several little chapels are scattered round, dedicated to particular gods, distinguished by different names, and some of them too presiding over different fountains. For, besides the principal one, which is, as it were, the parent of all the rest, there are several other lesser streams, which taking their rise from various sources, lose themselves in the river; over which a bridge is built, that separates the sacred part from that which lies open to common use. Vessels are allowed to come above this bridge, but no person is permitted to swim, * except below it. The Hispellates, to whom Augustus gave this place, furnish a public bath, and likewise entertain all strangers, at their own expense. Several villas, attracted by the beauty of this river, are situated upon its borders. In short, every object that presents itself, will afford you entertainment. You may also amuse yourself with numberless inscriptions that are fixed upon the pillars and walls by different persons, celebrating the virtues of the fountain, and the divinity that presides over it. There are many of them you will greatly admire, as there are some that will make you laugh; but I must correct myself when I say so; you are too humane, I know, to laugh upon such an occasion. Farewell.

* The touch of a naked body was thought to pollute these consecrated waters, as appears from a passage in Tacitus, l. 14. ann. c. 22.

Epist. IX. PLINY to URSUS.

A Long time has passed since I have taken either a book, or a pen in my hand. A long time has passed since I have known the sweets of leisure and repose; since I have known, in short, that indolent, but agreeable situation of doing nothing, and being nothing: so much have the affairs of my friends engaged me, and prevented me from enjoying the pleasures of retirement and contemplation. There is no sort of studies, however, of consequence enough to supersede the duty of friendship: on the contrary, it is a sacred tie which they themselves teach us most religiously to preserve. Farewell.

*Epist. X. PLINY to FABATUS *.*

YOur concern to hear of my wife's miscarriage, will be equal, I know, to the earnest desire you have, that we should make you a great-grandfather. The inexperience of her youth rendered her ignorant that she was breeding; so that she not only neglected the proper precautions, but managed herself in a way extremely unsuitable to a person in her circumstances. But she has severely atoned for her mistake, by the utmost hazard of her life. Though you should (as most certainly you will) be afflicted to see yourself thus disappointed in your old age, of the immediate hopes of leaving a family behind you; yet it deserves your gratitude to the gods, that in the preservation of your grand-daughter, you have still reason to expect that blessing: an expectation so much the more certain, as she has given this proof, though an unhappy one indeed, of her being capable of bearing children. These, at least,

* His wife's grandfather.

are the reflections by which I endeavour to confirm my own hopes, and comfort myself under my present disappointment. You cannot more ardently wish to have great-grandchildren, than I do to have children, as the dignity of both our families seems to open to them a sure road to honours, and we shall leave them the glory of descending from a long race of ancestors, whose fame is as extensive as their nobility is ancient. May we but have the pleasure of seeing them born, it will make us amends for the present disappointment ! Farewell.

*Epist. XI. PLINY to HISPULLA *.*

WHen I reflect upon your affection to your brother's daughter, an affection even exceeding the tenderness of a mother, I think I ought in the first place to inform you of her recovery, before I tell you she has been ill ; that the sentiments of joy at the one, may leave you no leisure to be afflicted at the other. Though I fear indeed, after your first transports of gratulation are over, you will feel some concern, and in the midst of your joy for the danger she has escaped, will tremble at the thought of that which she has undergone. She is now, however, in good spirits, and again restored to herself and to me ; as she is making the same progress in the recovery of her strength and health, that she did in the loss of them. To say the truth, (and I may now safely tell it you), she was in the utmost hazard of her life ; not indeed from any fault of her own, but a little from the inexperience of her youth. To this must be imputed the cause of her miscarriage, and the sad experience she has had of the consequence of not knowing she was breed-

* His wife's aunt.



ing. But though this misfortune has deprived you of the consolation of a nephew, or niece, to supply the loss of your brother; you must remember that blessing seems rather to be deferred than denied, since her life is preserved from whom that happiness is to be expected. I entreat you then to represent this accident to your * father in the most favourable light; as your sex are the best advocates in cases of this kind. Farewell.

Epist. XII. PLINY to MINUTIANUS.

I Must excuse myself to you this one day: Titinius Capito is to recite a performance of his, and I know not whether it is most my inclination, or my duty to attend him. He is a man of a most amiable disposition, and justly to be numbered among the brightest ornaments of our age: he studiously cultivates the polite arts himself, and generously admires and encourages them in others. To several who have distinguished themselves by their compositions, he has been the defence, the refuge, and the reward; as he affords a glorious model and example to all in general. In a word, he is the restorer and reformer of learning, now alas! well nigh grown obsolete and decayed. His house is open to every man of genius who has any works to rehearse; and it is not there alone that he attends these assemblies with the most obliging good nature. I am sure at least he never once excused himself from mine, if he happened to be at Rome. I should therefore with a more than ordinary ill grace refuse to return him the same favour, as the occasion of doing it is peculiarly glorious. Should not I think myself obliged to a man, who, if I were engaged in any law-suit, generously attended the

* Fabatus, grandfather to Calphurnia, Pliny's wife.
cause

cause in which I was interested? And am I less indebted, now that my whole care and business is of the literary kind, for his assiduity in my concerns of this sort? a point which, if not the only, is however the principal instance wherein I can be obliged. But though I owed him no return of this nature; though I were not engaged to him by the reciprocal tie of the same good offices he has done me; yet not only the beauty of his extensive genius, as polite as it is severely correct, but the dignity of his subject, would strongly incite me to be of his audience. He has written an account of the deaths of several illustrious persons, some of which were my particular friends. It is a pious office then, it should seem, as I could not be present at their obsequies, to attend, at least, this (as I may call it) their funeral oration; which though a late, is however, for that reason, a more unsuspected tribute to their memories. Farewell.

Epist. XIII. PLINY TO GENIALIS.

I AM much pleased that you have read my orations in company with your father. It is highly for your advantage to learn from a man of his eloquence, what to admire in compositions of this kind, and what to condemn; as you will at the same time be trained up in an habitual custom of speaking your real sentiments. You see whole steps it is you ought to follow; and happy are you in having a living example before you, which is at once the nearest and the noblest model you can pursue! In a word, that he whom nature designed you should most resemble, is, of all others, the person whom you should most imitate. Farewell.

Epist. XIV. PLINY to ARISTO.

AS you are no less a perfect master of the political laws of your country (which include the customs and usages of the senate) than of the civil, I am particularly desirous to have your opinion, whether I was mistaken in an affair which lately came before the house. This I request, not with a view of being directed in my judgment as to what is past, (for that is now too late), but in order to know how to conduct myself, if any case of the same nature should hereafter arise. You will ask, perhaps, why I apply to you for information concerning a point, wherein I ought to be well instructed? But the tyranny of former reigns, as it introduced a neglect and ignorance of all other parts of useful knowledge, so particularly of what relates to the customs of the senate; for who is there so tamely industrious as to desire to learn, what he can never have an opportunity of putting in practice? Besides, it is not very easy to retain even the knowledge one has acquired, where no occasion of exercising it occurs. Hence it was, that Liberty, at her return, found us in the utmost ignorance and inexperience; and thus, in the warmth of our eagerness to taste the sweets, we are sometimes hurried on to action, ere we are well informed in what manner we ought to act. But by the institution of our ancestors it was wisely provided, that the young should learn from the old, not only by precept, but by their own observation, how to behave in that sphere, wherein they were one day themselves to move; as these, in their turn, transmitted the same method of instruction to their children. Upon this principle it was, that the youth were sent early into the army, that by being taught to obey, they might learn to command, and whilst they followed others,

thers, might be trained up by degrees to be leaders themselves. And thus, when they were candidates for any office, they were obliged to stand at the entrance of the senate, that they might be spectators, before they were admitted parties in the public council of the empire. The father of each youth was his instructor upon these occasions, or if he had none, some person of years and dignity supplied the place of a father. Thus they were taught by that surest method of discipline, example, how far the right of proposing any law to the senate extended; what privileges a senator had in delivering his opinion in the house; the power of the magistrates in that assembly, and the rights of the rest of the members; where it is proper to yield, and where to insist; when and how long to speak, and when to be silent; how to distinguish and separate contrary opinions *, and how to improve upon a former motion: in a word, they learned by this means, whatever relates to the conduct of a man as a member of the senate. As for myself, it is true indeed, I served in the army when I was a youth; but it was at a time when courage was suspected, and cowardice honoured; when the generals were without authority, and the soldiers without modesty; when there were neither discipline nor obedience, but all was riot, disorder, and confusion; in short, when it was happier to forget, than remember what one learned. I attended likewise in my youth the senate, but a senate that was mute and dispirited; where it was

* If any opinion proposed to the senate, was thought too general, and to include several distinct articles, some of which might be approved, and others rejected, it was usual to require that it might be divided; and this they sometimes did by a general voice of the assembly, crying out *Divide, divide*. Middleton. Treat. on the Roman senate. 137.

dangerous to speak one's sentiments, and infamous to be silent. What satisfaction in learning, or indeed what could be learned, when the senate sat in the utmost indolence, or acted with the highest infamy ! when they were convened either for cruel or ridiculous purposes * ; and when their deliberations were never serious, though often f d. But I was not only a witness to this scene of wretchedness, as a spectator ; I bore my share of it too as a senator, and both saw and suffered under it for many years ; which so broke and damped my spirits, that they have not even yet been able fully to recover themselves. It is but a short time (and it seems so much the shorter in proportion to its happiness) since we could take any pleasure in knowing what relates to, or in exercising the duties of our station. Upon these considerations, therefore, I may reasonably entreat you, in the first place, to pardon my error, (if I have been guilty of one), and in the next, to guide me out of it by your superior knowledge : for I am sensible you have ever been curious to examine into the constitution of your country, both with respect to its public and private, its ancient and modern, its general and particular laws. I am persuaded indeed the point upon

* The fourth satire of Juvenal will serve as a comment upon this passage, where he acquaints us that a turbot of a most enormous size being brought to Domitian, he immediately convened the senate, in order to consult in what manner it should be dressed. The poet mentions the names of the persons who spoke in this remarkable debate, and their several opinions upon a question so important, concluding his satire with this pathetic wish :

*Alas ! as this day, that he had spent the rest,
And his dire reign had only been a jest !
Nor Rome her noblest blood had tamely seen
Flow unrevenge'd ! ———*

Sat. 4.
which

which I am going to consult you, is so unusual, that even those whose great experience in public business must have made them, one should imagine, acquainted with every thing of this nature, were either not thoroughly apprised, or absolutely ignorant of it. I shall be more excusable, therefore, if I happen to have been mistaken; as you will gain so much the higher applause, if you can set me right in an affair, which it is not clear has ever yet fallen within your observation. The inquiry then before the house was, concerning the death of Afranius Dexter, who being found murdered, it was uncertain whether he fell by his own hands, or by those of his freedmen; and if the latter, whether they committed the fact in * obedience to the commands of Afranius, or were prompted to it by their own villany. After they had been put to the question, a certain senator (it is of no importance to mention his name, but if you are desirous to know, it was myself) was for acquitting them; another proposed that they should be banished for a limited time; and a third, that they should be put to death. These several opinions were so extremely opposite, that it was impossible either of them could stand with the other; and therefore, in taking the voices, I thought they ought to be numbered separately. For what is there in common between the sentiments of those who thought the accused deserved banishment, and those who were of opinion they merited death? Nothing more, in truth, than there is between those who voted for banishment, and the others who were for acquit-

* Those who destroyed themselves, frequently made use of the hands of their servants for that purpose. Thus Brutus and Cassius, after the loss of that fatal battle which decided the liberties of Rome, ran each of them upon the swords of their attendants. Florus, l. 4. c. 7.

ting the prisoners. Though indeed he who was for discharging them, approached nearer to the sentiments of him who proposed exile, than the other who moved that they should suffer death : for both the former agreed at least in this, that their lives should be spared, whereas the latter were for a capital conviction. In the mean while, those senators who were for punishing with death, and those who proposed banishment, sat together on the same side of the house ; and thus, by a present appearance of union, suspended their real disagreement. I moved therefore, that each of the three opinions should be separately counted, and that two of them should not, under favour of a short truce between themselves, join against the third. I insisted that such of the members as were for capital punishment, should divide from the others who voted for banishment ; and that these two distinct parties should not be permitted to form themselves into a body, in opposition to those who declared for acquittal, when they would immediately after disunite again : for it was not material that they agreed in disliking one proposal, since they differed with respect to the other two. It seemed very extraordinary, that he who moved the freedmen should be banished, and the slaves suffer death, should not be allowed to join these two in one motion, but that the question should be ordered to be put to the house in the disjunctive ; and yet that the votes of those who were for inflicting capital punishment upon the freedmen, should be taken together with those who were for banishing them. For if, in the former instance, it was reasonable that the motion should be divided, because it comprehended two distinct things ; I could not see why, in the latter case, suffrages so extremely different should be thrown into the same scale. Permit me then, notwithstanding the point is determined,

determined, to go over it again as if it were still undecided, and to lay before you those reasons at my ease, which I offered to the house in the midst of much interruption and clamour. Let us suppose there had been only three judges appointed to hear this cause, one of which was of opinion that the parties in question deserved death; the other, that they should only be banished; and the third, that they ought to be acquitted: should the two former unite their strength to the destruction of the latter? or should each of them separately be balanced? For the first and second are no more compatible than the second and third. They ought therefore in the same manner to be counted in the senate as contrary, since they were delivered as different opinions. Suppose the same person had moved, that they should both have been banished and put to death; could they possibly, in pursuance of this opinion, have suffered both punishments? Or could it have been esteemed as one consistent motion, when it united two such different things? Why then should the same opinion, when delivered by distinct persons, be considered as one and entire, which would not be deemed so if it were proposed by a single person? Does not the law manifestly imply, that a distinction is to be made between those who are for a capital conviction, and those who are for banishment, in the very form of words made use of when the house is ordered to divide? *You who are of such an opinion, come to this side; you who are of any other, go over to the side of him whose opinion you follow.* Let us examine this form, and weigh every sentence: *You who are of this opinion;* that is, for instance, *you who are for banishment, come on this side;* namely, on the side of him who moved for banishment. From whence it is clear he cannot remain on the side of those who are for death.

You

You who are for any other: observe, the law is not contented with barely saying another, but she adds any. Now, can there be a doubt, whether they who declare for a capital conviction are of any other opinion, than those who propose exile? *Go over to the side of him whose opinion you follow*: does not the law seem, as it were, to force those who are of different sentiments, to contrary sides? Does not the consul himself point out, not only by this solemn form of words, but by his hand and gesture, the place in which every man is to remain, or to which he is to go over? “But,” it is objected, “if this separation is made between
 “those who vote for inflicting death, and those
 “who are on the side of exile, the opinion for
 “quitting the prisoners must necessarily prevail.” But how does that affect the parties who vote? Certainly it becomes not them to contend by every art, and urge every expedient, that the milder sentence may not take place. “Still,” say they, “those who are for condemning the accused
 “either capitally or to banishment, should be
 “first set in opposition to those who are for absolving them, and afterwards weighed against
 “each other.” Thus as, in certain public games, some are by lot to engage with the conqueror; so, it seems, in the senate there is a first and second combat, and of two different sentiments, the prevailing one has still a third to contend with. What? when any particular opinion is received, do not all the rest fall of course? Is it reasonable then, that one should be thrown into the scale merely to weigh down another? To express my meaning more plainly: unless the two parties, who are for capital punishment and exile immediately separate upon the first division of the house, it would be to no purpose afterwards to dissent from those with whom they joined before.--But I am dictating instead
 of

of receiving instruction. Tell me then whether you think these votes should have been taken separately? My sentiments, it is true, prevailed, nevertheless I am desirous to know whether you think I ought to have insisted upon this point, or have yielded as that member did who declared for capital punishment? For convinced, I will not say of the legality, however of the equity of my proposal, he receded from his own opinion, and went over to the party for exile: fearing perhaps, if the votes were taken separately (which he saw would be the case), the freedmen would be acquitted: for the numbers were far greater on that side than on either of the other two, separately counted. The consequence was, that those who had been influenced by his authority, when they saw themselves forsaken by his going over to the other party, gave up a motion which they found abandoned by the first author, and deserted, as it were, with their leader. Thus the three opinions were resolved at length into two; and of those two, one prevailed, and the other was rejected; while the third, as it was not powerful enough to conquer both the others, had only to chuse to which of the two it would yield. Farewell.

Epist. XV. PLINY to JUNIOR.

BY sending you such a number of volumes at once, I doubt I have overburdened you: but if I have, remember you required them of me. Besides, as you wrote me word you were likely to reap but little from the fruits of your vineyards, I imagined you would be at leisure to reap (as we say) the fruits of learning. I have received the same bad accounts of my own little farms; and am myself therefore at full leisure to write books for you, provided I can but raise money

money enough to furnish me with good paper. For should I be reduced to the coarse and spongy sort, either I must not write at all, or whatever I compose, whether good or bad, must necessarily undergo one cruel blot! Farewell.

Epist. XVI. PLINY to PATERNUS.

THE sickness which has lately run through my family, and carried off several of my domestics, some of them too in the prime of their years, has deeply afflicted me. I have two consolations, however, which though they are not equal to so considerable a grief, still they are consolations. One is, that as I have always very readily manumized my slaves, their death does not seem altogether immature, if they lived long enough to receive their freedom: the other, that I have allowed them to make a kind of will*, which I observe as religiously as if they were legally entitled to that privilege. I receive and obey their last requests, as so many authoritative commands, suffering them to dispose of their effects to whom they please; with this single restriction, that they leave them to some in my family, which to persons in their station is to be esteemed as a sort of commonwealth. But though I endeavour to acquiesce under these reflections, yet the same tenderness which led me to shew them these indulgences, still breaks out and overpowers my strongest resolutions. However, I could not wish to be insensible to these soft impressions of humanity: though the generality of the world, I know, look upon losses of this kind in no other view, than as a diminution of their property, and fancy by cherishing such an

* A slave could acquire no property, and consequently was incapable by law of making a will.

unfeeling temper, they discover a superior fortitude and good sense. Their wisdom and magnanimity I shall not dispute. But manly, I am sure, they are not; for it is the very criterion of true manhood to feel those impressions of sorrow which it endeavours to resist; and to admit, not to be above the want of consolation. But perhaps I have detained you too long upon this subject, — though not so long as I would. There is a certain pleasure in giving vent to one's grief; especially when we pour out our sorrow in the bosom of a friend, who will approve, or at least, pardon our tears *. Farewell.

Epist.

* There is something so uncommonly amiable in this family-piece, that the reader cannot be displeased with being stopped a moment to take a second view of it. If nothing remained of Pliny, but this single trait of his character, we might nevertheless assuredly pronounce of him, that he was ennobled by every social virtue: for as it is certain the greatest minds have ever been most open to impressions of the humane kind; so every moral virtue necessarily flows from benevolence, as from its true and genuine source. It is impossible a man who has a just feeling of the calamities of others, can deliberately break through the moral ties of any kind; because it is certain he cannot do so, without being the occasion of suffering to those who stand within the influence of the particular action. This principle also will ever afford the most unerring test of patriotism, or the public affections; for the cruel and unrelenting in private and domestic life, can never act upon the true notion of liberty, in the more enlarged relations of public concerns. With great justice therefore our author makes this generous principle the evidence of real manhood; as Juvenal describes a tenderness of disposition to be the principal note of distinction, which nature has marked out between the rational and brute creation:

Heaven

Epist. XVII. PLINY to MACRINUS.

IS the season with you as inclement and tempestuous as it is with us? All here is tempest and inundation. The Tiber has swelled its channel, and overflowed its banks far and wide. Though the wise precaution of the emperor had guarded against this evil, by cutting several outlets to the river; it has nevertheless flooded all the fields and valleys, and entirely overspread the whole face of the flat country. It seems to have gone out to meet those rivers which it used to receive and carry off in one intermingled stream; and has driven them back to deluge those countries it could not reach itself. That most delightful of rivers, the Anio, which seems invited and detained in its course by the charming villas that are situated upon its banks, has almost entirely rooted up and carried away the woods which shaded its borders. It has overthrown whole mountains, and in endeavouring to find a passage through the ruins that obstructed its way, has forced down houses, and rises over the desolation it has occasioned. The inhabitants of the hill countries, who are situated above the reach of this inundation, have been the melancholy spectators of its dreadful effects, having seen costly furniture, instruments of husbandry, ploughs, and oxen with their drivers, whole herds of cattle, together with the trunks of trees, and beams of the neighbouring villas, floating about

*Heaven gave the tear humane, a sign confess,
Soft pity dwells within the mortal breast;
That noblest passion no less bosoms know! —
Turn'd ever virtue from another's woe?
'Tis man's great privilege, the glorious line
That marks from brute, the human soul divine.*

Sat. xv. 131.

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in different parts. Nor indeed have these higher places themselves, to which the waters could not rise, escaped the calamity. A continued heavy rain as destructive as the river itself, poured down in torrents upon them, and has destroyed all the inclosures which divided that fertile country. It has damaged likewise, and even overturned some of the public buildings, where numbers have been miserably buried in the ruins. And thus those people, besides the loss of their effects, have suffered the additional misfortune of lamenting their friends. I am extremely uneasy lest this extensive ruin should have spread to you : I beg therefore, if it has not, you will immediately ease me of my fears. And indeed I desire you would inform me though it should ; for the difference is not great between fearing a danger, and feeling it ; except that the evil one feels has some bounds, whereas one's apprehensions have none. For we can suffer no more than what actually has, but we fear all that possibly may have happened. Farewell.

Epist. XVIII. PLINY to RUFINUS.

THE vulgar imagination is most certainly false, that a man's will is a kind of mirror wherein one may clearly see his genuine character. We have a late instance to the contrary in Domitius Tullus, who appears a much better man since his death, than during his life. After having artfully encouraged the expectations of those who paid court to him, with a view to being his heir, he has left his estate to his niece whom he adopted. He has given likewise several very considerable legacies among his grandchildren, and also to his great-grandson. In a word, he has shewn himself a kind relation throughout his whole will : which is so much the more to be

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admired, as it was not expected of him. This affair has been much the subject of conversation : some represent him as guilty of the basest falsehood and ingratitude ; and while they thus complain of him as if they were actually disinherited kindred, their invectives betray their own dishonest designs : others, on the contrary, applaud him extremely for having disappointed the hopes of this infamous tribe of men, whom, considering the manners of the age, it is but prudence to deceive. They add further, that he was not at liberty to make any other will, and that he cannot so properly be said to have left, as returned, his estate to his adopted daughter, since it was by her means it came to him. For Curtilius Mancina, whose daughter Domitius Lucanus, brother to this Tullus, married, having taken a dislike to his son-in-law, devised his estate to this young lady, (who was the issue of that marriage), upon condition that Lucanus, her father, would * emancipate her. He accordingly did so, but she being afterwards adopted by Tullus her uncle,

* That is, would make her free : for the power of a father over his children, was unlimited amongst the Romans. It extended not only to their fortunes, but their lives, and was even greater than what the laws allowed over their slaves ; for if a master sold his slave, who afterwards obtained his freedom, the former owner had no farther claim ; whereas, in the case of a son, the father's right was not absolutely extinguished by selling him, but if the son obtained his freedom, he again came under his dominion. And this authority could not be wholly disannulled till the son had been thrice sold, and as often recovered his liberty, and then it entirely ceased. The law vested the same power likewise as fully in the adoptive father, as in the natural. Justinian observes this authority was peculiar to the Romans, and followed by no other nation whatsoever. *Inst. l. 1.*

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the design of Mancian's will was entirely frustrated. For these two brothers having never divided their patrimony, but living together as joint-tenants of one common estate, the daughter of Lucanus, notwithstanding the act of emancipation, returned back again, together with her fortune, under the dominion of her father, by means of this fraudulent adoption. It seems indeed to have been the fate of these two brothers, to be enriched by those who had the greatest aversion to them. For Domitius Afer, by whom they were adopted, left a will in their favour, which he had made eighteen years before his death; though it was plain he had altered his sentiments with respect to the family, because he was instrumental in procuring the confiscation of their father's estate. There is something, in truth, extremely singular in the resentment of Afer, and the good fortune of the other two; as it was very extraordinary on one hand, that Domitius should endeavour to extirpate from the privileges of society, a man whose children he had adopted, and on the other, that these brothers should find a parent in the very person that ruined their father. But it was highly just in Tullus, after having been appointed sole heir by his brother, in prejudice to his own daughter, to make her amends by giving her this estate which came to him from Afer, as well as all the rest which he possessed in common with his brother. His will therefore deserves the highest applause, as it is the dictates of nature, justice, and honour; wherein he has returned his obligations to his several relations, according to their respective good offices towards him. He has made a just acknowledgment likewise to his wife, having bequeathed to that excellent woman, who patiently endured much upon his account, several delightful villas, besides a large sum of money. And indeed she

deserved so much the more at his hands, as she was highly censured for her marriage with him. It was thought unworthy a person of her rank and merit, after having had a former husband by whom she had issue, to marry, in the decline of her life, an old man, merely for his riches, who was so sickly and infirm, that even though he had passed the best years of his youth and health with her, she might well have been weary of him. He had so entirely lost the use of all his limbs, that he could not move himself in bed without assistance; and all the enjoyment he had of his riches, was only to contemplate them. He was even reduced to the wretched necessity (which indeed one cannot mention without loathing as well as lamenting) of having his teeth washed and cleansed by others: and he used frequently to say, when he was complaining of the indecencies which his infirmities obliged him to suffer, that he was every day forced to take his servant's fingers into his mouth. Still, however, he lived, and was willing to accept of life upon these terms; the preservation of which was particularly owing to the care of his wife, who, whatever reputation she might lose at first by her marriage, acquired great honour by her after-conduct towards him. — Thus I have given you all the news of the town, where nothing is talked of but Tullus. It is expected his curiosities will shortly be sold by auction. He had such vast numbers of fine statues, which stood neglected in a lumber-room, that he actually filled a large garden with them; the very same day he purchased it. — If you have any thing worth communicating in return, I hope you will not refuse the trouble of writing to me; not only as we are all naturally fond of news, but because example has a very beneficial influence upon our own conduct. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XIX. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

I Find both entertainment and comfort in my studies: and as there is no pleasure I prefer to them, so there is no uneasiness they do not alleviate. In this season therefore of dejection, occasioned by the indisposition of my wife, the dangerous sickness of some of my servants, and the death of others, I fly to my books, those sovereign composers of my grief. It is true, indeed, they teach me a greater sensibility to misfortunes, but they teach me too how to bear them with more patience. It is an established rule with me, before I publish any of my productions, to take the judgment of my friends upon them, especially yours. I beg therefore you would examine the performance I here send you, with particular care, as I am afraid, the disquietude of my mind may have prevented me from giving it the attention I ought. For though I could command myself so far as to sit down to write, I was not master enough of my heart, to do so with ease and cheerfulness: but it flung throws the mind into a pleasing state of serenity, a state of serenity is necessary to throw a grace upon our studies. Farewell.

Epist. XX. PLINY to GALLUS.

WE undertake long voyages both by sea and land, to behold those curiosities, which, if they lie within our reach, we overlook and neglect: whether it be that we are naturally less inquisitive concerning those things which are near us, while we are pushed forward in pursuit of remote objects; or because the easiness of gratifying a desire, is always sure to damp it; or, perhaps, that we defer from time to time viewing,

viewing, what we know we have an opportunity of seeing when we please. Whatever the reason be, it is certain there are several rarities in and near Rome, which we have not only never seen, but even never so much as heard of: and yet if they had been the produce of Greece, or Egypt, or Asia, or any other country which we admire as fruitful in wonders, they would long since have been the subject both of our conversation and inspection. For myself at least, I confess, I have lately been entertained with one of these curiosities, to which I was an entire stranger before. My wife's grandfather desired I would look upon his estate near Ameria. As I was walking over his grounds, I was shewn a lake that lies below them, called Vadimon, which I was informed had several very extraordinary qualities attending it. This raised my curiosity to take a nearer view. It is formed exactly circular; there is not the least obliquity or winding, but all is regular, and even as if it had been hollowed and cut out by the hand of art. The colour of its water is clearer than that of the sea, though of a deeper green; it seems by its taste and smell impregnated with sulphur, and is esteemed of great efficacy in all fractures of the limbs, which it is supposed to consolidate. Though it is but of a moderate extent, yet the winds have a great effect upon it, throwing it into violent commotions. No vessels are suffered to sail here, as its waters are held sacred; but several floating* islands swim about it, covered with reeds and rushes, and whatever other plants the neighbouring

* The credit of this account does not rest entirely upon our author: Pliny the elder mentions these floating islands, [l. 2. 95.], and so does Seneca, who accounts for them upon philosophical principles. [Q. N. l. 3. 25.]. Varenus says, that in Honduras, a province

bouring marsh and the borders of the lake produce. These islands differ in their size and shape; but the edges of all of them are worn away by their frequent collision against the shore and one another. They have equally the same height and motion; as their respective roors, which are formed like the keel of a boat, may be seen hanging down in the water, on whichever side you stand. Sometimes they move in a cluster, and seem to form one entire little continent; sometimes they are dispersed into different quarters by the winds; at other times, when it is calm, they float up and down separately. You may frequently see one of the larger islands sailing along with a lesser joined to it, like a ship with its longboat: or perhaps, seeming to strive which shall outswim the other: then again they all assemble in one station, and by joining themselves to the shore, sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other, make the lake appear considerably less, till at last uniting in the centre they restore it to its usual size. The sheep which graze upon the borders of this lake, frequently go upon these islands to feed, without perceiving that they have left the shore, till they are alarmed by finding themselves surrounded with water; and in the same manner when the wind drives them back again, they return without being sensible that they are landed. This lake empties itself into a river, which after running a little way sinks under ground, and if any

province in Amerca, there is a lake in which are several little hills planted with shrubs, &c. tossed up and down by the winds. And he quotes Boethius the Scotch historian, who affirms that in a large *loch*, called *Lomond Loch*, in Scotland, there is a floating island, upon which cattle graze. See Varen. Geogr. vol. 1. p. 412.

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thing is thrown in, brings it up again where the stream emerges. — I have given you this account, because I imagined it would not be less new, nor less agreeable to you than it was to me; as I know you take the same pleasure as myself, in contemplating the works of nature. Farewell.

Epist. XXI. PLINY to ARRIANUS.

AS in life, so in studies, according to my opinion, nothing is more amiable, and more agreeable to society, than to temper gravity with gaiety, lest the former should degenerate into austere ness, and the latter run up into levity. Upon this maxim it is, that I diversify my more serious works with compositions of a lighter nature. I had chosen a convenient place and season for some productions of that sort to make their appearance in; and designing to accustom them early to the tables of the idle, I fixed upon the month of July, when the courts of justice are as usually shut up, in order to read them to some of my friends at supper; and accordingly I placed a desk before each of my guests. But as I happened that morning to be unexpectedly called away to attend a cause, I took occasion to preface my recital with an apology. I entreated my audience not to impute it to me as any want of due regard for the business to which I had invited them, that on the very day I had appropriated to read my performances to some of my friends, (though indeed but few), I did not abstain from serving others in the affairs of the bar. I assured them I would observe the same rule in my writings, and should always give the preference to points of importance, before those of entertainment; to serious subjects, before gay ones; and to my friends, before myself. The poems I recited consisted of a variety of subjects, in different

ferent measures. It is by such arts as these, we who dare not rely upon the single force of our genius, endeavour to avoid giving our readers a satiety. In compliance with the earnest solicitation of my audience, I recited for two days successively; but not in the manner that several practise, by passing over the less shining passages, and making a merit of so doing: on the contrary, I omitted nothing, and freely owned that I did not. I read the whole, that I might correct the whole; which it is impossible those who only select particular passages, should do. The latter method, indeed, may have the more appearance of modesty, and perhaps respect; but the former shews greater simplicity, as well as more affection towards the audience. For the belief that a man's friends have so much regard to him, as not to be weary upon these occasions, is a sure indication of his own love for them. To say the truth, one has little obligation to an audience, if they assemble merely with a view to their own entertainment. He who had rather find his friend's performance correct, than make it so, is to be considered as a stranger, or one who is too indolent to give himself any trouble. Your affection for me leaves me no room to doubt, that you are impatient to read my book; which is yet however not ripe for your perusal. You shall do so, when I have corrected it; which was indeed the design of my recital. You are already acquainted with some parts of it; but even those, after they have been polished, (or perhaps spoiled, as is sometimes the case by too frequent corrections), will seem new to you. For when a composition has undergone various changes, it contracts an air of novelty even in those parts which remain unaltered. Farewell.

Epist. XXII. PLINY to GEMINIUS.

DID you never observe a certain set of people, who though they are themselves slaves to every vice, shew a kind of malicious resentment against the errors of others; and are most severe upon those whom they most resemble? yet, surely, a lenity of disposition, even in persons who have the least occasion for clemency themselves, is of all other virtues the most becoming. The highest of all characters, in my estimation, is his, who is ready to pardon the errors of mankind, as if he were every day guilty of some himself; and at the same time as cautious of committing a fault, as if he never forgave one. It is a rule then which we should upon all occasions, both private and public, most religiously observe, “to be inexorable to our own failings, while we
 “treat those of the rest of the world with tenderness, not excepting even such as forgive none
 “but themselves;” remembering always what the humane, and, therefore, as well as upon other accounts, the great Thræsea used frequently to say: * *He who hates vice, hates mankind.* You

* The meaning of this maxim seems to be, that, as it is extremely difficult to separate the action from the man, we should not suffer the errors of the world to raise in us that acrimony of indignation, which if well examined, perhaps, will be oftener found to proceed from some secret principle of malice, than a just abhorrence of vice; *Satius est* (as Seneca observes) *publicos mores et humana vitia, placide accipere*; a general philanthropy and universal benevolence being the most genuine marks, by which virtue distinguishes those who are truly in her interest. If this sense is admitted, there will be no need to suppose (as some of the commentators have) that any mistake is crept into the text.

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will ask me, perhaps, who it is that has given occasion to these reflections? You must know a certain person lately — but of that when we meet — though, upon second thoughts, not even then, lest whilst I condemn and expose his conduct, I should act counter to that maxim I particularly recommend. Whoever therefore, and whatever he is, shall remain in silence: for though there may be some use, perhaps, in setting a mark upon the man, for the sake of example; there will be more, however, in sparing him, for the sake of humanity. Farewell.

Epist. XXIII. PLINY to MARCELLINUS.

MY extreme grief for the death of Junius Avitus, has rendered me incapable of business, study, or amusement. He was invested with the laticlave in my house; as in all the honours he solicited, he was constantly assisted by my interest. I will add too, his affection and esteem for me were so great, that he formed his manners, and regulated his conduct by my guidance and direction: a disposition extremely uncommon in the youth of this age; for who among them will deign to submit to the experience and authority of their superiors? They think themselves at once in full possession of all wisdom and knowledge; and without revering or imitating the virtues of any, imagine they are a sufficient example to themselves. But Avitus was of a far different turn; he shewed his wisdom, in believing there were some who had more; and discovered his knowledge, in his desire to learn. He was ever consulting his friends upon some point relating to his studies, or his conduct; and he always returned from them with advantage, either by the advice he received, or the disposition he shewed. With what respect
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did he treat Servianus, one of the most accomplished men of the age? Avitus knew how to value such uncommon merit, as well as to endear himself to him in his turn. Accordingly when Servianus went lieutenant from Germany into Pannonia, he attended him as tribune; not so much in the character of his fellow-officer, as of his friend and admirer. With what care and integrity did he execute the office of quæstor under several consuls, who all esteemed him, not only as an useful and experienced officer, but as a pleasing and agreeable companion? With what industry and application did he solicit this very ædileship, from the enjoyment of which he is now prematurely snatched? a reflection that gives a peculiar poignancy to my affliction for the loss of him. His unavailing labours, his fruitless solicitations, and the honour which he merited only, not enjoyed, are for ever in my thoughts. The circumstance of his having first put on the laticlave under my roof; the first and the last suffrage I ever gave him; the conversations we have had, and the consultations we have held, all return fresh upon my mind. I am struck with the most tender sorrow when I consider his youth, and reflect upon the irreparable loss his family has sustained: an aged parent, a young wife to whom he had not been married much above a year; an infant daughter just born; so many pleasing hopes, so many tender joys, all reserved and destroyed in one day! When he was just elected ædile; when he was lately commenced a bridegroom; when he was newly made a father, he was taken from the midst of these enjoyments, and has left behind him an honour untasted, a mother inconsolable, a widowed wife, and an orphan infant, who will have the misfortune of never having known her father! But what increases my tears upon this melancholy

melancholy occasion is, that being absent when this accident happened, I never knew of his sickness, till I heard of his death, and had no time to prepare myself for this cruel stroke, by previously apprehending it! — Such is the present distress of my mind! — You must not wonder then that it is the whole subject of my letter; for I am not able at present to think or talk of any thing else. Farewell.

Epist. XXIV. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

THE affection I profess to have for you, obliges me, not indeed to direct you, (for you are far above the want of a guide), but to remind you, however, of what you already know, and to admonish you carefully to observe and resolutely put in practice; that is, in other words, to know it to all the more useful purposes of knowledge. You will consider yourself as sent to that noble province, Achaia, the real and genuine Greece, where politeness, learning, and even agriculture itself, are supposed to have taken their first rise; as sent to govern a state composed of free cities; that is, to a society of men who breathe the spirit of true manhood and liberty *; who maintained the right they received from

* It is remarkable, that even after Greece was absorbed in the Roman empire, and became a province to it under the name of Achaia, it did not lose, with its power and sovereignty, that lively sense and love of liberty, which was the peculiar character of that people, amongst whom the arts were produced and brought to perfection. The Romans, when they had subdued Greece, left that generous, brave, polite people, in possession of many of their rights and privileges. And they maintained such an ardent zeal for liberty, that, to name no other instances of

from nature, by courage, by virtue, by alliances; in a word, by civil and religious faith. You will revere the gods and heroes their founders; you will respect their ancient glory, and even their very age, which as it is venerable in men, in states it is sacred. You will honour them therefore for their antiquity, and for those

it, when the civil wars happened in Italy, the Athenians very warmly espoused the party of Pompey, who fought for the republic: and after Cæsar was killed, they erected statues in honour of Brutus and Cassius, near to those of Hermodius and Aristogiton, their ancient deliverers. It was hence Greece, Athens in particular, after it was very much fallen and degenerated, continued still to be the metropolis of sciences, the school of all the fine arts, the standard and centre of good taste in all works of genius, to Cicero's time, and long afterwards; insomuch that Rome sent its most illustrious youth to be perfected there in polite literature, eloquence, philosophy, and all the ingenious arts and sciences; and the emperors who loved learning, if they could not go to Greece and become scholars there, as some of them did, brought Greece to them by inviting and receiving into their palaces its most celebrated professors and artists, and even intrusting the education of their children with Greek masters. Now, their continuing to excel in the arts and sciences, to what else can it be attributed, but to this, that with some small remains of liberty they retained the spirit of liberty, the love of it, and zeal for it? It was indeed in consequence of this alone, that they maintained, in some degree, even till Italy was quite over-run with barbarism, a sovereignty the Romans could not take from them; a sovereignty in science, arts, and good taste. It is impossible to account for it in any other way: they preserved the arts in a very great degree, because they retained the spirit of liberty in a very extraordinary one: *Turnbull on ancient painting, p. 100.*

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famous deeds which are truly, nay for those which are fabulously recorded of them. You will indulge them in the full exercise of their dignity, their privileges, and even their very vanity. Remember it was from this nation we derived our * laws; that she did not receive ours by conquest, but gave us hers by favour. Remember it is Athens that you approach; it is Lacedæmon you govern; and to deprive such a glorious people of the declining shadow, the remaining name of liberty, would be a hardship, would be even a barbarity of the severest kind. Physicians, you see, though with respect to diseases there is no difference between freedom and slavery, yet treat persons of the former rank with more tenderness, than those of the latter. Reflect on the noble figure these cities once made; but so reflect, as not to despise them for what they now are. Far be pride and asperity from my friend; nor fear, by a proper condescension, to lay yourself open to contempt. Can he who is vested with the power and bears the ensigns of authority, can he fail of meeting with respect, unless by pursuing base and sordid measures, and first breaking through that awful reverence he owes to himself? Ill, believe me, is

* About the year of Rome 300, that is, 452 years before Christ, ambassadors were sent into Greece, to make a collection of such laws and customs as the wisdom of that polite people had established, particularly the famous ones of Solon. At their return, these laws were approved and confirmed, and, together with some additional ones, were engraven on ten tables of brass. Two other tables of laws were soon afterwards added to these, which, together with the former, went by the name of the *twelve tables*, and were looked upon as the fountain of all law, public and private. *Liv. l. 3. c. 31. Ferriere hist. des lois civ. c. 5.*

power experienced by injuries; ill can terror command veneration, and far more prevalent is affection in obtaining one's desires, than fear. For terror operates no longer than its object is present, but love produces its effects at a distance; and as absence changes the former into hatred, it raises the other into respect. It behoves you therefore, (and I cannot but repeat it again), it behoves you thoroughly to consider the end of your office, and to represent to yourself how great and important the task is of governing a free state. For what is more becoming to human nature than well-ordered government, or more valuable than liberty! How ignominious then must his conduct be, who turns the first into confusion, and the latter into slavery? To these considerations let me add, that you have an established reputation to maintain: the fame you acquired by the administration of the questorship in * Bithynia, the good opinion of the emperor, the credit you obtained when you were tribune and prætor, in a word, this very government, which may be looked upon as the reward of your former services, are all so many glorious weights which are incumbent upon you to support. So much the more therefore ought you to endeavour that it may not be said, you shewed greater humanity, integrity, and ability in a province remote from Rome, than in one which lies nearer to it; in the midst of a nation of slaves, than among a free people; that it may not be said, it was chance, and not judgment, appointed you to this office; that your character was unknown and unexperienced, not tried and approved. For (and it is a maxim which your reading and conversation must have often suggested to you) it is far worse to lose the fame one has acquired, than never to have attained it. I again beg you would be per-

* A province in Anatolia, or Asia the Less.

suaded, that I did not write this letter with a design to instruct, but to remind you. Though indeed if I had, it would have only been in consequence of my affection for you : a point which I am in no apprehension of carrying beyond its just limits ; for there cannot be any danger of excess where we ought to advance as far as possible. Farewell.

B O O K IX.

Epist. I. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

I Have often advised you to publish, with as much expedition as possible, what you have written either in defence of yourself, or against Planta ; or rather indeed (as the circumstances of the case demanded) what you drew up with both those views : but I particularly press this advice upon you now that I hear he is dead. For though you read this piece to several of your friends, and put it into the hands of others, yet I should regret extremely, that the world should suspect you only began after his death, what it is most certain you had finished during his life. Let not the character my friend has acquired of firmness and resolution be called in question. And it will not, when both the candid and the malicious world shall know, that the death of your adversary did not give you the confidence of composing, but only anticipated the opportunity of publishing this piece. And thus you will avoid the imputation,

*With impious joy to triumph o'er the dead ** :

For what you wrote and actually recited when he was yet alive, will be considered as published

* Hom. Od. lib. 22.

so too, provided you publish it soon. If therefore you have any other work upon your hands, let me entreat you to lay it aside, and give your last finishing touches to this performance. It seemed to me indeed, when I formerly read it, to want no improvements ; and so it ought now to seem to you, as neither the thing itself requires, nor the time will admit of any farther delay. Farewell.

Epist. II. PLINY to SABINUS.

YOU oblige me extremely, in desiring that I would write to you very frequent and very long letters. If I have forborn to do so, it is partly in consideration of the important affairs in which you are employed ; and partly from some very cold and uninteresting engagements of my own, which dissipate my thoughts, and at the same time damp my imagination. Besides, I have not a sufficient supply of matter for frequent letters ; and am by no means in the same situation that Tully was, whom you point out to me as an example. He not only possessed a most enlarged genius, but the circumstances of the times wherein he lived, furnished him with a variety of noble occasions of exercising it. As for myself, you know (without my telling you) to what narrow limits I am confined, unless my letters were to turn upon the fictitious and pedantic topics of the schools. But when I consider you in the midst of arms and incampments, inflamed with martial music, or fatigued with toil and heat, how absurd would it be to talk to you upon such subjects ? This is my apology, and I think a reasonable one ; however, I almost wish you would not accept it : for to reject the excuses of a friend upon such an occasion, be they e-
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ver so just, is an evident proof of a warm affection. Farewell.

Epist. III. PLINY to PAULINUS.

THough mankind differ in their notions of happiness ; yet in my opinion it consists in the anticipation of an honest fame, and the conscious security of making a glorious figure in the eyes of posterity. I confess, if I had not the reward of an immortal reputation in view, I should prefer a life of uninterrupted ease and retirement, to any other. There seem to be but two points worthy our attention ; either the endless duration of fame, or the short extent of life. Those who are governed by the former consideration, must pursue it with the full exertion of the most laborious efforts ; while such as are influenced by the latter should quietly resign themselves to repose, nor wear out a short life in perishable pursuits : as some, we may observe, do, and then sink at last into contempt, in the midst of a wretched and fruitless course of false industry. These are my daily reflections, which I communicate to you, in order to renounce them, if you do not join with me in the same sentiments ; as undoubtedly you will, who are forever meditating some glorious and immortal enterprise. Farewell.

Epist. IV. PLINY to MACRINUS.

I Should be under apprehensions you would think the oration which you receive with this letter, immoderately long, but that it is of such a nature as to require several breaks ; and as it consists of different charges, has the appearance of so many distinct speeches. Wherever therefore you begin or end, you may consider what follows, either as connected with what

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went before, or making of itself a new subject ; so that you may look upon it as very long upon the whole, and yet as extremely short with respect to its particular parts. Farewell.

Epist. V. PLINY to TIRO.

YOU deserve the highest applauses for the mildness with which, as I am informed, (and I make very strict inquiry), you administer justice in your province ; one principal branch of which is to distinguish merit in every degree, and so to gain the love of the lower rank, as to preserve at the same time the affection of their superiors. But it is an error many have fallen into, that while they endeavour to avoid the appearance of favouring the great, they run into the contrary extreme, and gain the character of acting with ill manners, or ill nature. A mistake this, which you are far from committing, I well know : however, I cannot forbear throwing in a caution with my applause, and recommending it to you, to conduct yourself in such a manner as to keep up the distinction of rank and dignity. For to level and confound the different orders of mankind, is far from producing an equality among them ; it is, in truth, the most unequal thing imaginable. Farewell.

Epist. VI. PLINY to CALVISIUS.

I Have spent these several days past in my study with the most pleasing tranquillity imaginable. You will ask how that can possibly be in the midst of Rome ? It was the time of celebrating the * Circensian games ; an entertainment

* These games were originally of Græcian extraction, but first introduced among the Romans by Romulus,

ment for which I have not the least taste. They have no novelty, no variety to recommend them, nothing, in short, one would wish to see twice. It is the more surprising therefore, that so many thousand people should be possessed with the childish passion of desiring often to see a parcel of horses gallop, and men standing upright in their chariots. If indeed it were the swiftness of the horses, or the skill of the men that attracted them, there might be some little pretence of reason on their side. But it is the dress they * favour; it is the dress that captivates them. And if in the midst of the course the different parties were to change habits, their different favourers would change sides, and instantly desert the very same men and horses, whom they just before were eagerly following with their eyes, as far as they could see, and hallooing out their names with all the warmth of exclamation. Such mighty charms, such wondrous power is there in a vile tunic! and this in the sentiments, not only of the vulgar (more contemptible than the habit they espouse), but even in the opinion of some grave personages. When I observe such men thus insatiably fond of so silly, so low, so uninteresting, so common an entertainment, I congratu-

lus, in order to favour his design of carrying off the Sabin virgins: they consisted of horse and chariot races, &c.

* The performers at these games were divided into companies, distinguished by the particular colour of their habits; the principal of which were the white, the red, the blue, and the green. Accordingly the spectators favoured one or the other colour, as humour and caprice inclined them. In the reign of Justinian, a tumult arose in Constantinople, occasioned merely by a contention among the partisans of these several colours, wherein no less than 30,000 men lost their lives.

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tulate myself that I am insensible to these pleasures ; and am glad to employ the leisure of this season upon my books, which others throw away upon the most idle employment. Farewell.

Epist. VII. PLINY to ROMANUS.

YOU write me, that you are engaged in building, and I am glad to find you are ; for I may now defend my own conduct by your example. I am myself employed in the same sort of work : and since I have you, who shall deny I have reason on my side ? We are pretty much agreed likewise, I find, in our situations : and as your buildings are carried on upon the sea-coast, mine are rising upon the side of the Larian lake. I have several villas upon the borders of this lake, but there are two particularly, in which as I take most delight, so they give me most employment. They are both situated in the manner of those at * Baïæ ; one of them stands upon a rock, and has a prospect of the lake ; the other actually touches it. The first, supported as it were by the lofty † buskin, I call my tragic ; the other, as
resting

* It was the place the Romans chose for their winter-retreat, and which they frequented upon account of its warm baths. Some few ruins of the beautiful villas that once covered this delightful coast, still remain ; and nothing can give one a higher idea of the prodigious expense and magnificence of the Romans in their private buildings, than the manner in which some of these were situated. It appears from this letter, as well as from several other passages in the classic writers, that they actually projected into the sea, being erected upon vast piles sunk for that purpose.

† The buskin was a kind of high shoe worn upon the stage by the actors of tragedy, in order to give them
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resting upon the humble sock, my comic villa. They have both their particular beauties, which recommend themselves to me so much the more, as they are of different kinds. The former commands a wider prospect of the lake; the latter enjoys a nearer view of it. This by an easy bend embraces a little bay; the promontory upon which the other stands, forms two. Here you have a straight walk extending itself along the banks of the lake; there a spacious terrace that falls by a gentle descent towards it. The former does not perceive the force of the waves; the latter breaks them: from that you see the fishing-vessels below; from this you may fish yourself, and throw your line out of your chamber, and even as you lie in bed, as out of a boat. It is the beauties therefore these agreeable villas possess, that tempt me to add to them those which are wanting. — But I need not assign a reason to you; who, undoubtedly, will think it a sufficient one that I follow your example. Farewell.

Epist. VIII. PLINY to AUGURINUS.

AS I have been praised by you, should I begin to praise you in my turn, I am afraid it should seem I did so, not so much to shew my judgment, as my gratitude. Nevertheless I will not scruple to say, that I think all your productions are beautiful; especially, no doubt, those of which I am the subject. And the same reason will account both for their deserving that character, and for my thinking so: for as, on the one hand, you ever succeed best when friendship in-

them a more heroical elevation of stature; as the sock was something between a shoe and stocking, and appropriated to the comic players.

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spires you ; so, on the other, I always admire most what flatters my self-love. Farewell.

Epist. IX. PLINY to COLO.

I Greatly approve the generous grief you shew for the death of Pompeius Quinctianus, as it is a proof that your affection for your departed friend, does not terminate with his life. Far different from those who love, or rather, I should more properly say, who counterfeit love to none but the living ; nor indeed even that any longer than they are the favourites of fortune ; for the unhappy are no more the object of their thoughts, than the dead. But your friendship is raised upon a more lasting foundation, and the constancy of your affection can only end with your life. Quinctianus, most certainly, well deserved to meet with that generous warmth from his friends, of which he was himself so bright an example. He loved them in prosperity ; he protected them in adversity ; he lamented them in death. How open was his countenance ! how modest his conversation ! how equally did he temper gravity with gaiety ! how fond was he of learning ! how judicious his sentiments ! how dutiful to a father of a very different character ! and how did he reconcile his obedience to his virtue ; and continue a good son, without forfeiting the title of a good man ! — But I must not sharpen your affliction by reminding you of his merit — yet I know your affection for the memory of this excellent youth is such, that you had rather endure the pain of hearing him mentioned, than suffer his virtues to be passed over in silence ; especially by me, whose applause, you imagine, will adorn his actions, extend his fame, and restore him, as it were, to that life from which he is unhappily snatched. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. X. PLINY to TACITUS *.

I Should with great pleasure obey your advice ; but there is such a scarcity of boars, that it is impossible to reconcile Minerva with Diana, who, you think, ought to be worshipped together. I must content myself then with paying my single homage to the former ; and even that with some restriction, as considering the heats of the season, and the privileged indolence of retirement. I composed, indeed, a few trifles in my journey hither, which are only fit to be destroyed, as they are written with the same negligence and inattention that one usually chats upon the road. Since I came to my villa, I have made some few additions to them, not finding myself in a humour to turn my thoughts to things of more consequence. Thus my poetry, which you imagine is carried on with so much advantage amidst the silence and solemnity of woods and groves, is, in truth, at a stand. I have also revised an oration

* The learned Catanzus, with some other commentators, imagines this letter does not belong to Pliny, but is the answer of Tacitus to the 6th epistle of the first book. He supports this conjecture, indeed, by no authority : only thinks it falls in exactly with the letter, to which he supposes it an answer, and fancies he discovers something in the style different from our author's manner. But, upon a comparison of the two letters, there seems little reason to believe one is an answer to the other. And as to any difference of style (if there really be any), it is much too precarious an argument to have any weight in the case. The supposition of Casaubon seems more probable, who thinks this epistle might be occasioned by one from Tacitus, wherein he reminded Pliny of his own advice to him, in that letter to which Catanzus imagines this an answer.

or two; though that kind of work is disagreeable and unentertaining enough, and has a much nearer affinity with rustic labours, than with rural pleasures. Farewell.

Epist. XI. PLINY to GEMINUS.

I Received your letter, which was particularly agreeable to me, as it mentioned your desire that I would send you something of mine to insert in your works. I shall find an occasion of complying with your request more proper than that which you propose, the subject you point out to me being attended with some objections; and when you consider it again, you will think so.—As I did not imagine there were any book-sellers at Lugdunum, I am so much the more pleased to learn that my works are sold there. I rejoice to find they maintain the character abroad, which they raised at home; and I begin to flatter myself they have some merit, since persons of such distant countries are agreed in their sentiments concerning them. Farewell.

Epist. XII. PLINY to JUNIOR.

A Certain person lately corrected his son with great severity before me, for being somewhat too profuse in the article of dogs and horses. “And pray,” said I to him, when the youth was withdrawn, “did you never commit a fault yourself which deserved your father’s correction? Nay, are you not sometimes even now guilty of errors, which your son, were he in your place, might with equal gravity reprove? Are not all mankind subject to follies? And have we not each of us our particular foibles in which we fondly indulge ourselves?”

The great affection I have for you, induced me

me to set this instance of unreasonable severity before you, as a caution not to treat your son with too much rigour and austerity. Consider he is but a boy, and that there was a time when you were so too. In exerting, therefore, the authority of a father, remember always that you are a man, and the parent of a man. Farewell.

Epist. XIII. PLINY to QUADRATUS.

THE eagerness and attention with which you read the vindication which I published of Helvidius *, has extremely raised your curiosity, it seems, to be informed of every circumstance, either mentioned or not mentioned in that defence; and, in short, the whole proceedings in that affair, as you were too young to be present yourself at that transaction. When Domitian was killed, a glorious opportunity, I thought, offered itself to me of pursuing the guilty; vindicating the injured, and advancing my own reputation. But, amidst an infinite variety of the blackest crimes, none appeared to me more atrocious, than that a senator, of prætorian dignity, and invested with the sacred character of a judge, should, even in the very senate itself, lay violent hands upon a member † of that august assembly; upon one, who formerly had the honour of being consul, and who then stood arraigned before him. Besides this general consideration, I had likewise a particular intimacy with Helvidius; as far as it was possible to have with one, who, fearing the tyranny of the times, endeavoured to veil the

* He was accused of treason, under pretence that in a dramatic piece which he composed, he had, in the characters of Paris and Oenone, reflected upon Domitian for divorcing his wife Domitia. Suet. in vit. Domit. c. 10.

† Helvidius.

glory of his fame, and the lustre of his virtues, in obscurity and retirement. Arria likewise, and her daughter Fannia who was mother-in-law to Helvidius, were in the number of my friends. But it was not so much private attachments, as the honour of the public, a just indignation at the action, and the danger of the example if it should pass unpunished, that animated me upon this occasion. At the first restoration of * liberty, every man singled out his particular enemy, (though it must be confessed, those only of a lower rank), and in the midst of much clamour and confusion, no sooner brought the charge than procured the condemnation. But for myself, I thought it would have more the appearance of moderation as well as resolution, not to take advantage of the general resentment of the public, but to crush this criminal with the single weight of his own enormous guilt. When, therefore, the first heat of public indignation began to cool, and declining passion gave way to justice, though I was at that time under great affliction for the loss of † my wife, I sent to Anteia, the widow of Helvidius, and desired her to come to me, as my late misfortune obliged me to keep at home. When she arrived, I acquainted her with my resolution not to suffer the injuries her husband had received, to pass unrevenge; and desired her to consult with Arria and Fannia (who were just returned from exile), whether she and they would join with me in the prosecution. Not that I wanted, I said, an associate, but that I was not so jealous of my own glory, as to refuse to share it with them in this af-

* Upon the accession of Nerva to the empire, after the death of Domitian.

† Our author's first wife; of whom we have no particular account. After her death, he married his favourite Calphurnia.

fair.

fair. She accordingly carried this message; and they all agreed to the proposal without the least hesitation. It happened very opportunely, that the senate was to meet within three days. It was a general rule with me to consult, in all my affairs, with Corellius, a person of the greatest prudence and wisdom this age has produced. However, in the present case, I relied entirely upon my own discretion, being apprehensive he would not approve of my design, as he was of a very slow and cautious temper. But though I did not previously deliberate with him, (experience having taught me, never to advise with a person upon an affair we are determined to pursue, where he has a right to expect that one shall be decided by his judgment), yet I could not forbear acquainting him with my resolution at the time I intended to carry it into execution. The senate being assembled, I came into the house, and begged I might have leave to make a motion; which I did in few words, and with general assent. When I began to touch upon the charge, and point out the person I intended to accuse, (though as yet without mentioning him by name), I was attacked on all side. "Let us know," says one, "who is the subject of this extraordinary motion? Who is it?" (asked another) "that is thus accused, without acquainting the house with the name of the person, and the particular crime with which he is charged?" "Surely" (added a third) "we who have outlived the informations of former times, may expect now, at least, to remain in security." I heard all this with great calmness, and without being the least terrified. Such is the effect of being conscious of the integrity of one's designs; and so much difference is there with respect to inspiring confidence or fear in the breast of him who is engaged in any public action, whether

the world had only rather he should not do it, or absolutely condemns it. It would be too tedious to relate all that was thrown out by different sides upon this occasion. At length the consul acquainted me, that I should be at liberty to propose what I thought proper, when my turn came to give my opinion upon the * business of the day. I thanked him for allowing me a liberty, which he never yet (I said) refused to any; and so sat down: when immediately the house went upon other affairs. In the mean while, one of my consular friends took me aside, and with great earnestness telling me he thought I had carried on this affair with more boldness than prudence, used every method of reproof and persuasion, to prevail with me to desist; adding at the same time, that I should certainly, if I persevered, render myself odious to some future prince. “And “so I would wish to be,” (I returned), “should “he prove a wicked one.” He had scarce left me, when a second came up: “For God’s sake,” said he, “what are you attempting? Why will “you ruin yourself? Do you consider to what “hazards you are exposed? Why will you pre- “sume too much on the present situation of pu- “blic affairs, when it is so uncertain what turn “they may hereafter take? You are attacking a “man who is actually at the head of the treasury, “and will shortly be consul. Besides, do you “consider what credit he has, and with what “powerful friendships he is supported?” Upon which he named a certain person, who (not without several strong and suspicious rumours)

* It is very remarkable, that when any senator was asked his opinion in the house, he had the privilege of speaking as long as he pleased upon any other affair, before he came to the point in question. *Aul. Gell. lib. 4. c. 10.*

was then at the head of a powerful army in the east. I replied,

*All I've foreseen, and oft in thought revolv'd ** ;
 “ and am willing, if fate shall so decree, to suf-
 “ fer in an honest cause, provided I can draw
 “ vengeance down upon an infamous one.”
 The time for the members to give their opinion was now arrived. Domitius Apollinaris, the consul elect, spoke first ; after him Fabricius Vejent-
 to, then Fabius Posthumus, Vectius Proculus next, (who married my wife’s mother, and who was colleague of Publicius Certus, the person on whom the debate turned), and last of all Ammius Flaccus. They all defended Certus, as if I had named him, (though I had not yet so much as once mentioned him), and entered upon the particular justification of a crime, which I had only touched upon in general terms.. It is not necessary to repeat, in this place, what they said, as I have related it in their own words in the speech above mentioned. Avidius Quinctus, and Cornutus Tertullus answered them. The former observed, “ that it was extremely unjust not to
 “ hear the complaints of those who thought
 “ themselves injured, and therefore that Arria
 “ and Fannia ought not to be denied the privi-
 “ lege of laying their grievances before the
 “ house ; and that the point for the consideration
 “ of the senate was not the rank of the person,
 “ but the merit of the cause.” Then Cornutus rose up and told the house, “ that as he was
 “ appointed guardian to the daughter of Helvi-
 “ dius by the consuls, upon the petition of her
 “ mother and her father-in-law, he thought
 “ himself obliged to fulfil the duty of his trust.
 “ In the execution of which, however, he would
 “ endeavour to set some bounds to his indigna-

* *Æneid. lib. 6. ver. 105.*

“tion, by following that great example of mode-
 “ration which those excellent women * had set,
 “who contented themselves with barely inform-
 “ing the senate of the cruelties which Certus
 “committed in order to carry on his infamous
 “adulation. And therefore,” he said, “he would
 “only move, that if a punishment due to a crime
 “so notoriously known, should be remitted, that
 “at least Certus might be branded with some
 “mark of the displeasure of that august assem-
 “bly.” Satrius Rufus spoke next, and endea-
 vouring to steer a kind of middle course, expres-
 sed himself with much ambiguity. “I am of
 “opinion,” said he, “great injustice will be
 “done to Certus, if he is not acquitted, (for I do
 “not scruple to mention his name, since the
 “friends of Arria and Fannia, as well as his
 “own, have done so too), nor indeed have we
 “any occasion to be solicitous upon his account.
 “We who think well of the man, shall judge
 “him with the same impartiality as the rest:
 “but if he is innocent, as I hope he is, and shall
 “be glad to find, I think this house may very
 “justly deny the present motion, till something
 “shall be proved against him.” Thus, accord-
 ing to the respective order in which they were cal-
 led † upon, they delivered their several opinions.
 When it came to my turn, I rose up, and using
 the same introduction to my speech as I have pu-
 blished in the defence, I replied to them severally.

* Arria and Fannia.

† In the early times of the republic they began by
 asking the opinion of the prince of the senate, and the
 rest went on each according to his age. Under the
 emperors, their will served as a rule: for as the
 prince presided in the senate, he demanded the opi-
 nion of him first, whom he thought fit to do that
 honour: however, he more usually began with the
 consuls.

It is surprising with what an universal assent I was heard, even by those who just before were loudest against me: such a wonderful change was wrought either by the importance of the affair, the eloquence of the speech, or the resolution of the advocate. After I had finished, Veiento attempted to reply; but the general clamour raised against him, not permitting him to go on, "I hope, my Lords," said he, "you will not oblige me to implore the assistance of the tribunes." Immediately the tribune Murena cried out, "You have my leave, most illustrious Veiento, to proceed." But still the clamour was renewed. In the interval, the consul ordered the house to divide, and having counted the voices, dismissed the senate, leaving Veiento in the midst, still attempting to speak. He made great complaints of this affront (as he called it), applying the following lines of Homer to himself:

** Great perils, father, wait th' unequal fight;
Those younger champions will oppress thy might.*

There was scarce a man in the senate that did not embrace and kiss me, and all strove who should applaud me most, for having, with the utmost hazard to myself, revived a custom so long disused, of freely consulting the senate upon affairs that concern the honour of the public; in a word, for having wiped off that odium which was thrown upon it by other orders in the state, "that the senators mutually favoured the members of their own body, while they were extremely severe in animadverting upon the rest of their fellow-citizens." All this was trans-

** Diomedes's speech to Nestor, advising him to retire from the field of battle. Iliad. iii. 102. Pope.*

acted.

acted in the absence of Certus; who kept out of the way, either because he suspected something of this nature was intended to be moved, or (as was said in his excuse) that he was really indisposed. Cæsar, however, did not refer the examination of this matter to the senate. But I obtained nevertheless, what I aimed at, another person being appointed to succeed Certus in the consulship, while the election of his colleague to that office was confirmed. And thus the wish with which I concluded my speech, was actually accomplished: “May he be obliged,” said I, “to renounce under a * virtuous prince, that reward he received from an infamous one †.” Some time after I recollected as well as I could, the speech I had made upon this occasion; to which I threw in some additions. It happened (though indeed it had the appearance of being something more than casual), that a few days after I had published this piece, Certus was taken ill and died. It was reported, that his imagination was continually haunted with this affair, and represented me always before his eyes, like a man that was pursuing him with a dagger. Whether there was any truth in this rumour, I will not venture to affirm; but for the sake of example, however, I could wish it might gain credit. And now I have sent you a letter, which (considering it is a letter) is as long as the defence you say you have read; but you must thank yourself, for not being contented with the information that piece could afford you. Farewell.

* Nerva.

† Domitian; by whom he had been appointed consul elect, though he had not yet entered upon that office.

Epist. XIV. PLINY to TACITUS.

THough you do not care to hear your own praises, yet, be assured, none of my writings are more sincerely the undissembled dictates of my real thoughts, than those of which you are the subject. Whether, indeed, posterity will concern herself with either of us, I know not ; but surely we deserve some small regard at least, I will not say upon account of our geniuses, (that would be too vain a pretension), but from our application, our labours, and that high reverence we pay to her. Proceed we then, my friend, in the course we have begun, which as it has conducted some few to the fairest point of lustre and reputation, so it has led out numbers from silence and obscurity. Farewell.

Epist. XV. PLINY to FALCO.

I Retired to my villa at Tuscum, with the hopes of passing my time here, at least, in my own way : but that is a privilege, I find, I am not to enjoy even here ; so greatly am I interrupted with the troublesome complaints and petitions of my tenants. I look over their papers with more reluctance than my own ; for, to confess the truth, it is with great unwillingness I review even them. I am revising, however, some little orations ; an employment which, after a length of time has intervened, is but of a very cold and unenterprising kind. In the mean while, my private affairs are neglected as much as if I were absent. Yet I sometimes so far act the part of a careful master of a family, as to mount my horse and ride about my farms, instead of taking my exercise in the gestatio. As for you, I hope you will keep up your old custom, and, in return for
this

this account of my rural affairs, let me know what is going forward in town. Farewell.

Epist. XVI. PLINY to MAMILIANUS.

I AM not surprised that the chace you mention afforded you infinite pleasure, since “the number of the slain” (to use your own historical * expression) “was not to be counted.” As for myself, I have neither leisure nor inclination for sports of that kind: not leisure, because I am in the midst of my vintage; not inclination, because it has proved an extreme bad one this season. However, I shall be able, I hope, to draw off some new verses, at least, if not new wine, for your entertainment, which (since you request them in so agreeable a manner) I will not fail to send you, as soon as they shall be thoroughly settled. Farewell.

Epist. XVII. PLINY to GENITOR.

I Have received your letter, in which you complain of being highly disgusted lately at an entertainment, though exceeding splendid, by a set of buffoons, fools, and wanton prostitutes, who were playing their antic tricks † round the tables.

* An expression frequent among the historians in their descriptions of battles.

† These persons were introduced at most of the tables of the great, for the purposes of mirth and gaiety, and constituted an essential part in all polite entertainments among the Romans. It is surprising how soon this great people fell off from their original severity of manners, and were tainted with the false refinements of foreign luxury. Livy dates the rise of this, and other unmanly delicacies, from the conquest

tables. But let me advise you to smooth your brow a little. I confess, indeed, I admit nothing of this kind at my own house ; however, I bear with it in others. “ And why then ” (you will be ready to ask) “ should you not have them yourself ? ” The truth is, because the soft gestures of the wanton, the pleasantries of the buffoon, or the extravagancies of the fool, give me no entertainment, as they give me no surprise. It is my particular taste, you see, not my judgment, that I plead against them. And, indeed, what numbers are there who think the entertainments which you and I are most delighted with, to be no better than impertinent follies ! How many are there, who as soon as a reader, a musician, or a comedian is introduced, either take their leave of the company, or if they continue at the table, shew as much dislike to this kind of diversions, as you did at those monsters, as you call them ! Let us bear therefore, my friend, with others in their amusements, that they, in return, may shew indulgence to ours. Farewell.

Epist. XVIII. PLINY to SABINUS.

With what a degree of application and study you have read my works, and how perfectly you will treasure them in your memory, your letter is a sufficient testimony. Do you consider, then, what a troublesome affair you are bringing upon your hands, when you kindly en-

conquest of Scipio Asiaticus over Antiochus. This triumphant army caught, it seems, the contagious softness of the people it subdued ; and, at its return to Rome, spread an infection among their countrymen, which worked by slow degrees till it affected their total destruction. Thus did eastern luxury revenge itself on Roman arms !

tice me, by every friendly art to communicate to you as many of them as possible? I cannot, certainly, refuse your request; but shall comply with it, however, at different intervals, and observe some kind of succession. For I would not, by too copious and too frequent a supply, overburthen and confound a memory, to which I already owe so many acknowledgments; nor, in short, pour in such an unreasonable quantity, as to oblige it to discharge what it had before received, in order to retain what follows. Farewell.

Epist. XIX. PLINY to RUFFO.

YOU inform me, that you have read, in a letter * of mine, that Verginius Rufus directed the following lines to be inscribed upon his tomb:

*Here Rufus lies, who Vindex' arms withstood,
Not for himself, but for his country's good.*

You censure him for this; and add, that Frontinus acted much more reasonably, and discreetly, in forbidding any monument whatsoever to be erected to his memory. And in the conclusion of your letter you desire my sentiments upon each. I loved them both; but I confess I admired him most whom you condemn; and to such a degree, that so far from imagining I ever should have occasion to rise up in his defence, I thought he could never be sufficiently applauded. In my opinion, every man who has acted a great and memorable part, deserves not only to be excused, but approved, if he pursues that glorious immortality of fame he has merited, and endeavours to perpetuate an everlasting remembrance of himself, e-

* To Albinus. See book 6. let. 10.

ven by monument al inscriptions. Yet hardly shall you find a man, who had performed such great achievements, so modesty reserved upon the subject of his own actions, as Verginius was. I can bear him witness, (and I had the happiness to enjoy his intimacy and affection), that I never but once heard him mention his own conduct; and that was, in giving an account of a conversation which passed between him and Cluvius: “You well know” (said Cluvius to him) “the fidelity required in an historian; you will pardon me therefore, I hope, if you should meet with any thing in my works, that is not agreeable to you.” “O Cluvius,” he replied, “can you be ignorant that what I did, was in order that every man might enjoy the liberty of writing what he pleased?” But let us compare Frontinus with him in that very instance, wherein you think the former is more modest and reserved. He forbid a monument to be erected to him, it is true; but in what words? “The expense of a monument,” says he, “is superfluous; my memory will remain, if my actions deserve it.” Is there less vanity, do you think, thus to proclaim to all the * world that his memory would remain, than to mark upon a single tombstone, in two lines, the actions one has performed? It is not, however, my design to condemn your favourite; I only mean to defend Verginius: and what argument can be more prevailing with you, than one drawn from a comparison between him and the person you prefer? In my own opinion, indeed, neither of them deserve to be condemned, since they both pursued glory with the same passion, but by different roads;

* It appears from hence, that this was not a testamentary direction, but a declaration in some work which Frontinus had published.

the former, in desiring those monumental honours he had merited; the latter, in rather chusing the appearance of despising them. Farewell.

Epist. XX. PLINY to VENATOR.

YOur letter was so much the more agreeable to me, the longer it was; especially as it turned entirely upon my works. I am not at all surpris'd you should find a pleasure in them, since I know you have the same affection for every thing that belongs to me, as you have for myself.—

The getting in of my vintage (which though it has proved but a slender one this season, is, however, more plentiful than I expected) particularly employs me at present. It indeed I can with any propriety say so, who only gather a grape now and then, visit the vine-press, taste the must in the vat, and saunter to my domestics; who being all engaged without doors, have wholly abandoned me to my readers and my secretaries. Farewell.

Epist. XXI. PLINY to SABINIANUS.

YOur freedman, against whom you expressed so much anger, came to me, and threw himself at my feet with as much submission as he could have done at yours. He earnestly requested me with many tears, and even with all the eloquence of silent sorrow, to intercede for him; in short, he convinced me by his whole behaviour, that he sincerely repents of his fault. And I am persuaded he is thoroughly reformed, because he seems entirely sensible of his guilt. I know you are angry with him, and I know too, it is not without reason; but clemency can never exert itself with more applause, than when there
is

is the justest cause for resentment. You once had an affection for this man, and, I hope, will have again : in the mean while, let me only prevail with you to pardon him. If he should incur your displeasure hereafter, you will have so much the stronger plea in excuse for your anger, as you shew yourself more exorable to him now. Allow something to his youth, to his tears, and to your own natural mildness of temper : do not make him uneasy any longer ; and I will add too, do not make yourself so ; for a man of your benevolence of heart cannot be angry without feeling great regret. I am afraid, were I to join my entreaties with his, I should seem rather to compel, than request you to forgive him. Yet I will not scruple to do it ; and in so much the stronger terms, as I have very sharply and severely reproved him, positively threatening never to interpose again in his behalf. But though it was proper to say this to him, in order to make him more fearful of offending ; I do not say so to you. I may, perhaps, again have occasion to entreat you upon his account, and again obtain your forgiveness ; supposing, I mean, his error should be such as may become me to intercede for, and you to pardon. Farewell.

Epist. XXII. PLINY to SEVERUS.

THE illness of Passienus Paulus has occasioned to me not a little uneasiness ; and indeed I have many and just reasons. He has a most excellent and generous heart, of which I have the happiness to share the warmest friendship. In his writings he very successfully emulates the ancients, whose spirit and manner he has closely imitated and happily restored ; especially that of Propertius, to whom he is no less related by genius, than by blood, as he particularly re-

seemles that poet in his chief excellency. When you read his elegies, whatever is elegant, tender, and agreeable, will conspire to charm you; as you will clearly discover they derive their lineage from Propertius. He has lately made some attempts in the lyric kind, in which he as successfully copies the manner of Horace, as he has that of the other poet just mentioned: You would imagine, were there such a thing as a kindred in genius, that the blood of Horace likewise flowed in his veins. He displays a most wonderful compass and pregnancy of imagination: when he describes the passion of love, you perceive his heart is entirely possessed by the most tender sentiments; when he paints the emotions of grief, you see his breast is penetrated with the deepest sorrow; when he enters upon topics of panegyric, it is with all the ardour of the warmest benevolence; when he diverts himself with subjects of pleasantry, it is in the spirit of the most agreeable gaiety; in short, whatever species of poetry he engages in, he executes it with such a masterly hand, that one would imagine it were the single branch to which he had applied himself. The dangerous indisposition of such a friend and such a genius, occasioned as much anxiety to me, as it did pain to him. But at length he is recovered, and my peace is restored: an event which deserves your congratulation, not only for my sake, but for the sake of learning itself, which ran as great a hazard by his danger, as it will receive glory by his recovery. Farewell.

Epist. XXIII. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

IT has frequently happened, as I have been pleading, that the centumviri, after having preserved as much as possible the gravity and solemnity

lemnity suitable to their character, have at length been forced, as it were, to break through all restraints; and have risen up, with one consent, in my applause. I have often likewise gained as much glory in the senate, as my utmost wishes could desire: but I never was touched with a more sensible pleasure than by an account which I lately received from Cornelius Tacitus. He informed me, that, at the last Circensian games, he sat next to a Roman knight, who, after much discourse had passed between them upon various points of learning, asked him if he was an Italian, or a provincial? Tacitus replied, “Your acquaintance with literature must have informed you who I am.” “Ay!” said the knight, “Pray then is it Tacitus or Pliny I am talking with?” I cannot express how highly I am pleased to find, that our names are not so much the proper appellatives of men, as a kind of distinction for learning herself; and that eloquence renders us known to those who would be ignorant of us by any other means. An accident of the same nature happened to me a few days ago. Fabius Rufinus, a person of distinguished merit, was placed next to me at table; and below him a countryman of his, who was just then come to Rome for the first time. Rufinus desired his friend to take notice of me, and fell into a conversation upon the subject of my eloquence: to whom the other immediately replied, “That must undoubtedly be Pliny.” To own the truth, I look upon these instances as a very considerable recompense of my labours. Had Demosthenes reason to be pleased with the old woman of Athens crying out, * “This is Demosthenes!”

* The story, as related by Tully, is thus: Demosthenes met an old woman carrying a pail of water, upon which she whispers to her companion, “This

“*sthenes!*” And may I not be allowed to congratulate myself upon the extensive reputation my name has acquired? Yes, my friend, I will rejoice in it, and without scruple own that I do. As I only mention the judgment of others concerning me, not the opinion I conceive of myself, I am not afraid of incurring the censure of vanity *; especially

“This is Demosthenes!” I must not however conceal from the reader, that Tully condemns the Grecian orator for being pleased upon this occasion, and accounts for it in the true spirit of genuine philosophy †, *apud alios loqui videlicet didicerat, non multum ipse secum*: he had learned the art of talking to others, but was unacquainted, it seems, with the most instructive of all arts, the art of *self-converse*: a little of this home-philosophy would have taught him, in the judgment of Tully, to rate vulgar admiration at a lower value.

* Those who have formed their notions of modesty according to the false refinements in manners, which latter times have introduced, will take offence, probably, at the advantageous terms in which Pliny here, and in some other passages of these letters, speaks of himself. But it will not be just to estimate our author’s character, by maxims which have been received in the world long since he left it. It is most certain that modesty, according to the idea the ancients had of it, did not (neither in the truth of things does it) forbid a man to speak well of himself, where he has merit to support the character he claims. True modesty consisted only (as indeed it ought only to consist) in being ashamed to commit any thing base and unworthy; any thing unbecoming the dignity of human nature; any thing in defiance of that reverence we owe to ourselves, and to that rank we hold in the order of rational beings: she was, in short, the *custos virtutum omnium*, as Tully emphatical-

† Tusc. l. 5.

especially from you, who, as you envy no man's reputation, so you are particularly zealous for mine. Farewell.

ly calls her, the guardian and protectress of the whole train of human virtues. Pliny, who often recommends *modesty* as one of the most shining virtues in others, could never have spoken thus favourably of his own merit, if it had been contrary to the received notions of that most amiable quality. And that it was not, is extremely evident from the whole tenor of antiquity in the article of self-commendation. Homer's Ulysses (to borrow the observation of a very polite and judicious critic) "calls himself the *wisest* of the Grecians, as his Achilles does not scruple "to represent himself the *best and most valiant* of "them; and that too in a council of all the princes: "Virgil has given us his approbation of both the "one and the other, in making Æneas talk frequently of his own piety and valour. Socrates, in Plato, "is always brought in to his advantage; he himself "quotes the oracle, which pronounced him to be the "wisest of men. Xenophon represents Cyrus upon his "deathbed, as taking notice of the greatest beauty "of his own character, his humanity; in a piece "which every one knows was designed for the character of a perfect prince. Cæsar and the great Jewish writer of his own life frequently commend themselves: the greatest critic, as well as the greatest orator among the Romans, who so often "reckons modesty among the things which are most "necessary toward rendering a man great in his "profession; how open and frequent is he in "praising himself, and setting his own merit "in a true light? But what puts this beyond "dispute (and shews at the same time, that a just "commendation of one's self may be very consistent with the greatest modesty), is to be found in the sacred writings, in which Moses says of himself, that he was the *meekest man upon earth.*"
 Essay on Pope's Odyss. pt. 1. 52.

Epist.

Epist. XXIV. PLINY to SABINIANUS.

YOU have done well, upon the recommendation of my * letter, in receiving again into your family and favour, a freedman, whom you once admitted into a share of your affection. It will afford you, I doubt not, great satisfaction. It certainly, at least has me, both as it is a proof that you are capable of being governed in your passion, and as it is an instance of your paying so much regard to me, as either to yield to my authority, or to comply with my request. You will accept, therefore, at once, both of my applause and my thanks. At the same time I must advise you, to be disposed for the future to pardon the errors of your people, though there should be none to interpose in their behalf. Farewell.

Epist. XXV. PLINY to MAMILIANUS.

YOU make great complaints of the croud of military affairs which press upon you ; and yet, as if you were enjoying the most uninterrupted leisure, you read and admire my poetical trifles, and not a little encourage me still to persevere in them. I begin, indeed, to pursue this kind of study, not only with a view to my amusement, but my glory, since they have approved themselves to the judgment of a man of your gravity, and learning, and what is more than all, of your veracity. At present I have some causes upon my hands, which (though not very deeply indeed, however) engage me ; when I shall have dispatched these, I will again trust my muse in your candid bosom. You will suffer my little doves and sparrows to take wing among your

* See let. 21. of this book.

eagles *, if you should have the same good opinion of them as they have of themselves ; if not, you will kindly confine them to their cage and their nests. Farewell.

Epist. XXVI. PLINY to LUPERCUS.

I Said once (and I think not improperly) of a certain orator of the present age, whose compositions are extremely regular and correct, but by no means sublime and ornamented, “ his only fault is, that he has none.” Whereas he who is possessed of the true spirit of oratory, should be bold and elevated, and sometimes even flame out and be hurried away with all the warmth and violence of passion ; in short, he should frequently soar to great, and even dangerous heights : for precipices are generally near whatever is towering and exalted. The plain, it is true, affords a safer, but for that reason a more humble and inglorious path : they that run, are more likely to stumble than they that creep ; but the latter gain no honour by not slipping, while the former even fall with glory. It is with eloquence as with some other arts ; she is never more pleasing than when she hazards most. Have you not observed what acclamations our ropedancers excite, at the instant of imminent danger ? Whatever is most unexpected and hazardous, or, as the Greeks strongly express it, whatever is most daring, has always the greatest share of our admiration. The pilot’s skill is by no means equally proved in a calm, as in a storm : in the former case he tamely enters the port, unnoticed and unapplauded ; but when the cordage cracks, the mast bends, and the rudder groans, then is it that he shines forth in full lustre, and is adored as little inferior to a sea-god. The reason of my making this obser-

* Alluding to the Roman standard, which was an eagle fixed upon the top of a spear.

vation is, because, if I mistake not, you have marked some passages in my writings for being tumid, exorbitant, and over-wrought, which, in my estimation, are full, and bold, and sublime. But it is material to consider, whether your criticism turns upon such points as are real faults, or only striking and remarkable expressions. Whatever is elevated is sure to be observed; but it requires a very nice judgment to distinguish the bounds between true and false grandeur; between a just and enormous height. To give an instance out of Homer, both of the grand and elevated style, in the following lines; which can scarce, I imagine, have escaped any reader's observation!

*Heav'n in loud thunder bids the trumpet sound;
And wide beneath them groans the rending ground *;*

— Again,

Reclin'd on clouds his steed and armour lay †.
So in this whole passage:

‡ *As torrents roll, increas'd by numerous rills,
With rage impetuous down their echoing hills,
Rush to the vales, and pour'd along the plain,
Roar through a thousand channels to the main.*

It requires, I say, a very delicate hand to poise these metaphors, and determine whether they are
too

* Iliad. xxi. 387. Pope's trans.

† Iliad. v. 356. speaking of Mars.

‡ Iliad. 4. ver. 452. Pope's trans. It is with great judgment Pliny distinguishes between grandeur and elevation, which, though they are sometimes confounded, are most certainly distinct. Grandeur seems to consist entirely in the sentiment, and is the
first

too figurative and lofty, or truly majestic or sublime. Not that I think any thing which I have wrote or can write, admits of comparison with these. I am not extravagant enough to say so: what I would be understood to contend for is, that we should throw up the reins to eloquence, nor restrain the daring flights of genius within too narrow a compass. But it will be said, perhaps, there is a wide difference between orators and poets; as if, in truth, Tully were not as bold in his figures as any of the poets. But not to mention particular instances from him, in a point where, I imagine, there can be no dispute; does * Demosthenes himself, that mo-

first of the five species of sublimity which Longinus has enumerated. The passage that admired critic quotes from the account which Moses gives of the creation, is of this kind: *God said, Let there be light, and there was light.* Here is nothing in the expression ornamented or elevated; the language is plain and simple, yet conveys to the mind the noblest idea of omnipotence that the utmost efforts of the strongest imagination can conceive. But when a sublime thought is clothed (if I may so say) in all the graceful propriety of just figure, it then becomes elevated. The illustrations which our author produces from Homer, are of this sort, where greatness of sentiment is heightened by beauty or imagery.

* The design of Pliny in this letter is, to justify the figurative expressions he had employed, probably in some oration, by instances of the same warmth of colouring from those great masters of eloquence, Demosthenes and his rival Æschines. But the force of the passages which he produces from these orators, must necessarily be greatly weakened to a mere modern reader, some of them being only hinted at, as generally well known; and the metaphors in several of the others, have either lost much of their original spirit and boldness, by being introduced and received into common language, or cannot, perhaps, be preserved in an English translation.

del and standard of true oratory, does Demosthenes check and repress the fire of his genius, in that well-known passage which begins thus, “Ye infamous flatterers, ye evil geni?” &c. — And again, “It is neither with stones nor bricks that I have fortified this city,” &c. — And afterwards; “I have thrown up these outworks before Attica, and pointed out to you all the resources which human prudence can suggest,” &c. — And in another place; “O my countrymen, I swear by the immortal gods, that he is intoxicated with the grandeur of his own actions,” &c. — But what can be more daring and beautiful than that long digression, which begins in this manner: “A terrible disease, O my countrymen, has seized upon all Greece,” &c. ? — The following passage likewise, though something shorter, is conceived in the same boldness of metaphor: — “Then it was I rose up in opposition to the daring Pytho, who *poured forth a torrent* of menaces against you,” &c. — The subsequent stricture is of the same stamp: “When a man has strengthened himself, as Philip has, in avarice and wickedness, upon the first pretence that offers itself, at the first false step, be it ever so inconsiderable, *he bristles up his mane* and destroys all,” &c. — So in the same style with the foregoing is this: — “*Railed off*, as it were, from the privileges of society, by the concurrent and just judgments of the three tribunals in the city.” — And in the same place: “O Aristogiton! you have betrayed that mercy which used to be shewn to offences of this nature, or rather indeed, you have wholly exhausted it. In vain then would you fly for refuge to a *port*, which you have *shut up*, and *choked with piles*.” — He had said before; “I am afraid, therefore, you should appear, in the judgment of some, to have

“*set*

“ *set up a public office* for bad education ; for there
 “ is a weakness in all wickedness, which renders
 “ it unable to support itself !” — And a little low-
 “ er ; “ I see none of these resources open to
 “ him ; but all is *precipice, gulf, and profound*
 “ *abyss.*” — And again : “ Nor do I imagine that
 “ our ancestors erected those courts of judicature,
 “ that men of his character should be *planted*
 “ there ; but, on the contrary, that none may
 “ desire to imitate their evil actions.” — And af-
 terwards : “ If he is then the *artificer* of every
 “ wickedness, if he openly makes it his *trade* and
 “ *traffic,*” &c. — And a thousand other passa-
 ges which I might cite to the same purpose ; not
 to mention those expressions which Æschine
 says, are not words, but *wonders.* — You will
 tell me, perhaps, I have unwarily mentioned
 Æschines, since Demosthenes is condemned even
 by him, for running into these figurative expres-
 sions. But observe, I entreat you, how far su-
 perior the former orator is to his criticizer, and su-
 perior too in the very passages to which he ob-
 jects : for in others, the strength of his genius
 discovers itself ; in those above quoted, the subli-
 mity of it shines out. But does Æschines him-
 self avoid what he reproves in Demosthenes ?
 “ The orator,” says he, “ Athenians, and the
 “ law, ought to *speak* the same language ; but
 “ when the *voice* of the law declares one thing,
 “ and that of the orator another, we should give
 “ our vote to the justice of the law, not to the
 “ impudence of the orator.” — And in another
 place : “ He afterwards manifestly discovered the
 “ design he had, of concealing his fraud under
 “ cover of the decree, having expressly declared
 “ therein, that the ambassadors sent to the Orciæ
 “ gave the five talents, not to you, but to Cal-
 “ lias. And that you may be convinced what I
 “ say is the truth (after having *stripped* the decree

“ of its *galleys*, its pomp and ostentation) read the
 “ clause itself.” — And in another part: “ Suf-
 “ fer him not to *break over* and *wander* out of the
 “ limits of the question.” A metaphor he is so
 fond of, that he repeats it again: “ But remain-
 “ ing firm and confident in the assembly, *drive*
 “ him into the merits of the question, and observe
 “ well how he *doubles*.” — Is his style more reser-
 ved and simple, when he says, “ But you are for
 “ ever *wounding* our ears, and are more concern-
 “ ed in the success of your daily harangues, than
 “ for the salvation of the city?” — What follows
 is conceived in a yet higher strain of figure:
 “ Will you not expel this man as the common
 “ calamity of Greece! will you not seize and
 “ punish this *pirate* of the state, who *sails* about
 “ in quest of favourable conjunctures?” &c. —
 with many other passages of the like nature. And
 now I expect you will make the same attacks up-
 on certain expressions in this letter, as you did
 upon those I have been endeavouring to defend.
 The rudder that *greaves*, and the pilot compared
 to a *sea-god*, will not, I imagine, escape your criti-
 cism: for I perceive while I am suing for indul-
 gence to my former style, I have fallen into the
 same turn of figure that you condemn. But at-
 tack them if you please, provided you will imme-
 diately appoint a day when we may meet to dis-
 cuss these matters in person: you will then, either
 teach me to be less daring, or I shall learn you to
 be more bold. Farewell.

Epist. XXVII. FLINY to LATERANUS.

I Have had many occasions to observe the
 power, the dignity, the majesty, and I will
 add too, even the divine efficacy there is in histo-
 ry, but I never met with so strong an instance of
 it as lately. An author had recited part of an
 historical

historical performance, which he had drawn up with the utmost regard to truth, reserving the remainder for another day. When behold! the friends of a certain person came to him, and earnestly conjured him not to recite the rest: so much were they ashamed to hear those actions repeated, which yet they did not blush to commit: the historian complied (as he well might, without any breach of honour) with their request. But, however, both the history and the action still remain, and will ever remain and be read; and read too with so much the greater curiosity, as the publication of it is delayed: for nothing raises the inquisitive disposition of mankind so much, as to defer the gratification of it. Farewell.

Epist. XXVIII. PLINY to ROMANUS.

YOUR letters have at length reached me, and I received three at once; all written in the strongest spirit of eloquence and friendship, and such as I had reason to expect from you, especially after having wished for them so long. In one, you injoin me the very agreeable commission of forwarding your letter to that excellent lady, the virtuous * Plotina: I will take care to .

* Plotina was consort to the emperor Trajan. Her virtues are celebrated by several historians, and our author draws a most amiable character of her in few words, in his noble panegyric upon that prince. He represents her (and he could not give a higher idea of her) as meriting the choice of that excellent emperor; of a sanctity of manners worthy of ancient Rome; plain in her habit, modest in her equipage, and polite in her address. She greatly contributed, it is said, to the wise choice which Trajan made of a successor; and Adrian, in gratitude for her good of-

to do so. At the same time you recommend to me Popilius Artemisius; and accordingly I have performed your request. You tell me also your vintage has proved extremely moderate. That complaint, notwithstanding we are separated by such distant countries, is common to us both. Your second letter informs me, that you are employed in dictating and writing upon a subject, wherein you have me strongly in view. I am much obliged to you; and should be more so, if you would give me the pleasure of reading your performance. It is but just indeed, that as I communicate to you all my compositions, you should suffer me to partake of yours, even though they should turn upon subjects which concern others. You promise me in the close of your letter, that as soon as you shall be informed with certainty, in what manner I intend to dispose of myself, you will make an elopement from your family, and immediately fly to me: I am already preparing certain chains for you, which, when I have you here, you will by no means be able to break through. I learn from your third, that my oration in behalf of Clarius has been delivered to you, which appears, it seems, more full than when you heard it pronounced. It is so, I confess; for I afterwards very considerably enlarged it. You mention having sent me another letter, which you say was written with peculiar elegance, and desire to know if I have received it: I have not, but impatiently wish for its arrival. To make me amends, write to me upon every the first opportunity, and pay me with full interest for this delay; which I shall compute, be assured, at the

sices to him in that election, dedicated a magnificent temple to her memory, at Nismes in Languedoc; the remains of which are still to be seen.

highest

highest rate : for tell me, can I acquit you upon more reasonable terms ? Farewell.

Epist. XXIX. PLINY to RUSTICUS.

AS it is far better to excel in any single art, than to arrive only at a mediocrity in several ; so, on the other hand, a moderate skill in several is to be preferred, where one cannot attain to perfection in any. Upon this maxim it is, that I have attempted compositions of various sorts, as I could not expect to carry any particular one to its highest point of excellency. I hope, therefore, when you read any performance of mine, you will consider it with that indulgence which is due to an author, who has not confined himself to a single manner of writing, but has struck out into different kinds. In every other sort of workmanship, the number pleads some excuse for the deficiencies of the artist ; and shall works of literature, the most difficult of all others, be tried by a severer law ? But whilst I am bespeaking your candour, am I not bringing my gratitude in question ? For, if you receive these last pieces with the same indulgence that you have all my former, I have more reason to hope for your applause, than to sue for your pardon. However, your pardon will be sufficient. Farewell.

Epist. XXX. PLINY to GEMINIUS.

YOU have frequently in conversation, and lately in a letter, commended your friend Nonius to me for his great liberality to some particular persons : I shall join with you in his applause, if his bounty is not confined to those only. I would have him who desires to shew himself influenced by a spirit of true generosity, be liberal
to

to his country, his kindred, his relations, and his friends; his friends, I mean, in distress: not like those who chiefly bestow their presents, where there is the greatest ability to make returns. I do not look upon such as parting with any thing of their own; on the contrary, I consider their bounties as only so many disguised baits, thrown out with a design of catching the property of others. Much of the same character are those who defraud one man in order to be generous to another, and pursue munificence through the paths of avarice. The first and fundamental principle of genuine liberality, is to be contented with one's own; and after that to cherish and embrace all the most indigent of every kind, in one comprehensive circle of benevolence. If your friend observes this rule in its full extent, he is entirely to be commended; if he only partially pursues it, still he deserves (in a less degree indeed, however, he deserves) applause: so uncommon is it to meet with an instance of generosity even of the most imperfect kind! The lust of avarice has so totally seized upon mankind, that their wealth seems rather to possess them, than they to possess their wealth. Farewell.

Epist. XXXI. PLINY to SARDUS.

I Still continued with you, notwithstanding we had parted: for I entertained myself with reading over your book. And I frequently repeated with particular fondness (I honestly own it) those passages of which I am the subject: a subject upon which, indeed, you have been extremely copious. With what a variety of expression, and in how many different lights have you placed the same sentiments concerning the same person? Will you suffer me to mingle my applauses.

applauses with my acknowledgments? I can do neither, sufficiently; and if I could, there would be something, I fear, of vanity, in making that the subject of my praise, which is, in truth, the object of my thanks. I will only add then, that I thought your compliments to me raised the merit of your performance; as the merit of your performance heightened the pleasure of your compliments. Farewell.

Epist. XXXII. PLINY to TITIANUS.

WHat are you doing? and what do you propose to do? As for myself, I pass my life in the most agreeable, that is, in the most disengaged manner imaginable. I do not find myself, therefore, in the humour to write a long letter, though I am to read one. I am too much a man of pleasure for the former, and just idle enough for the latter: for none are more indolent, you know, than the voluptuous, or have more curiosity than those who have nothing to do. Farewell.

Epist. XXXIII. PLINY to CANINIUS.

I Have met with a story, which, though it is supported by undoubted credit, has all the air of fable, and would afford a very proper subject for the sublimity of your lively, and truly poetical genius. It was related to me the other day at table, where the conversation happened to turn upon various kinds of miraculous events. The person who gave the account, was a man of unsuspected veracity: — but what has a poet to do with truth? However, you might venture to rely upon his testimony, even though you had the character of a faithful historian to support. There is in Africa a town called Hippos, situated
not

not far from the sea-coast : it stands upon a navigable lake, from whence a current runs into the main ocean, which ebbs and flows with the sea. Persons of all ages divert themselves here with fishing, sailing, or swimming; especially boys, whom love of play and idleness bring hither. The contest among them is, who shall have the glory of swimming farthest; and he that leaves the shore and his companions at the greatest distance, gains the victory. It happened in one of these trials of skill, that a certain boy, more bold than the rest, launched out towards the opposite shore. He was met by a dolphin *, who sometimes swam before him, and sometimes behind him, then played round him, and at last took him upon his back, then let him down, and afterwards took him up again; and thus carried the poor frightened boy out into the deepest part; when immediately he turns back again to the shore, and lands him among his companions. The fame of this remarkable accident spread through the town, and crowds of people flocked round the boy (whom they viewed as a kind of prodigy) to ask him questions and hear him relate the story. The next day the shore was lined with multitudes of spectators, all attentively observing the ocean, and (what indeed is almost itself an ocean) the lake. In the mean while the boys swam as usual, and among the rest, the youth I am speaking of went into the lake, but with more caution than before. The dolphin appeared again, and came to the boy, who together with his companions swam away with the utmost preci-

* This animal is celebrated by several of the ancients for its philanthropy, and Pliny the elder, in particular, relates this very story, among other instances, in confirmation of that notion. See Plin. hist. nat. l. 9. c. 8.

pitiation. The dolphin, as it were, to invite and recall them, bounded and dived up and down, winding about in a thousand different circles. This he practised for several days together, till the people (accustomed from their infancy to the sea) began to be ashamed of their timidity. They ventured, therefore, to advance nearer, playing with him and calling him to them, while he, in return, suffered himself to be touched and stroked. Use rendered them more courageous: The boy, in particular, who first made the experiment, swam by the side of him, and leaping upon his back, was carried about in that manner: thus they began to be fond of and acquainted with each other. There seemed now, indeed, to be no fear on either side, the confidence of the one and tameness of the other mutually increasing; the rest of the boys in the mean while surrounding and encouraging their companion. It is very remarkable, that this dolphin was followed by a second, which seemed only as a spectator and attendant on the former; for he did not at all submit to the same familiarities as the first, but only conducted him backwards and forwards, as the boys did their comrade. But what is farther surprising, and no less true than that I have already related, is, this dolphin who thus played with the boys and carried them upon his back, would come upon the shore, dry himself in the sand, and as soon as he grew warm, roll back into the sea. Octavius Avitus, deputy-governor of the province, from an absurd piece of superstition, poured * some precious ointment over him

* It was a religious ceremony practised by the ancients, to pour precious ointments upon the statues of their gods: Avitus, it is probable, imagined this dolphin was some sea-divinity, and therefore expressed his veneration of him by the solemnity of a sacred unction.

as he lay on the shore: the novelty and smell of which made him retire into the ocean, and it was not till after several days that he was seen again, when he appeared dull and languid; however, he recovered his strength, and continued his usual wanton tricks. All the magistrates round the country flocked hither to view this sight, the entertainment of whom upon their arrival, and during their stay, was an additional expense, which the slender finances of this little community would ill afford; besides, the quiet and retirement of the place was utterly destroyed. It was thought proper therefore to remove the occasion of this concourse, by privately killing the poor dolphin. And now, with what a flow of tenderness will you describe this sad * catastrophe! and how will your genius adorn and heighten this moving story! I hough, indeed, it does not require any fictitious embellishments; it will be sufficient to place the real circumstances in their full light. Farewell.

* The overflowing humanity of Pliny's temper breaks out upon all occasions, but he discovers it in nothing more strongly than by the impression which this little story appears to have made upon him. True benevolence, indeed, extends itself through the whole compass of existence, and sympathizes with the distress of every creature capable of sensation. Little minds may be apt to consider a compassion of this inferior kind, as an instance of weakness; but it is undoubtedly the evidence of a noble nature. Homer thought it not unbecoming the character even of a hero, to melt into tears at a distress of this sort, and has given us a most amiable and affecting picture of Ulysses weeping over his faithful dog Argus, when he expires at his feet.

Epist.

Epist. XXXIV. PLINY to TRANQUILLUS.

I AM under a strange difficulty, which you must settle. I have not, I am told, a good manner of reading verses: my talent lying chiefly in reciting orations, I succeed so much the worse, it seems, in poetry. I design therefore, as I am to recite some poems to my particular friends, to make use of my freedman for that purpose. It is an instance, I own, of my treating them with little ceremony, that I employ a person who is not himself very expert in this way. However, he will perform, I know, better than I can, provided his fears do not disconcert him; for he is as unpractised a reader as I am a poet. Now the important question is, how I shall behave while he is reading; whether I shall sit in a fixed and indolent posture, or follow him as he pronounces, with my eyes, hands, and voice; a manner which some, you know, practise? But I am apprehensive I can beat time * no better than I can read. I repeat it again therefore, you must extricate me out of this wondrous difficulty, and write me word whether you think it more excusable to read ill, than to practise or omit any of the weighty circumstances above mentioned. Farewell.

Epist. XXXV. PLINY to APPIUS.

I Have received the book, which you sent me, and return you thanks for it: but am at pre-

* In the original it is called *salutatio*, which means a motion of the hands accommodated either to one's own or another's elocution. Our language does not supply a proper word for this gesture.

sent so much engaged, that I have not time to read it: which, however, I impatiently wish to do. I have that high reverence for learning in general, and for your compositions in particular, that I think it a sort of profanation to approach them but with a mind entirely disengaged. — I extremely approve of your care in revising your works; remember, however, this exactness has its limits: too much polishing rather weakens than strengthens a performance. Besides, this excessive delicacy, while it calls one off from other pursuits, not only prevents any new attempts, but does not even finish what it has begun. Farewell.

Epist. XXXVI. PLINY to FUSCUS.

YOU desire to know in what manner I dispose of my time, in summer, at my villa at Tusculum. I rise just when I find myself in the humour, though generally with the sun; sometimes indeed sooner, but seldom later. When I am up, I continue to keep the shutters of my chamber-windows closed, as darkness and silence wonderfully promote meditation. Thus free and abstracted from those outward objects which dissipate attention, I am left to my own thoughts; nor suffer my mind to wander with my eyes, but keep my eyes in subjection to my mind, which, when they are not distracted by a multiplicity of external objects, see nothing but what the imagination represents to them. If I have any composition upon my hands, this is the time I chuse to consider it, not only with respect to the general plan, but even the style and expression, which I settle and correct as if I were actually writing. In this manner I compose more or less as the subject is more or less difficult, and I find myself able to retain it. Then I call my secretary, and,

and, opening the shutters, I dictate to him what I have composed, after which I dismiss him for a little while, and then call him in again. About ten or eleven of the clock, (for I do not observe one fixed hour), according as the weather proves, I either walk upon my terrace, or in the covered portico, and there I continue to meditate or dictate what remains upon the subject in which I am engaged. From thence I get into my chariot, where I employ myself as before, when I was walking or in my study; and find this changing of the scene preserves and enlivens my attention. At my return home, I repose myself; then I take a walk, and after that, repeat aloud some Greek or Latin oration, not so much for the sake of strengthening my elocution * as my digestion; though indeed the voice at the same time finds its account in this practice. Then I walk again, am anointed, take my exercises, and go into the bath. At supper, if I have only my wife, or a few friends with me, some author is read to us; and after supper we are entertained either with music, or an interlude. When that is finished, I take my walk with my family, in the number of which I am not without some persons of literature. Thus we pass our evenings in various conversation; and the day, even when it is at the longest, steals away imperceptibly. Upon some occasions, I change the order in certain of the articles above mentioned. For instance, if I

* By the regimen which Pliny here follows, one would imagine, if he had not told us who were his physicians, that the celebrated Celsus was in the number. That author expressly recommends reading aloud, and afterwards walking, as beneficial in disorders of the stomach: *Si quis stomacho laborat, legere clare debet: post lectionem, ambulare, &c.* Celsi medic. l. 1. c. 8.

have studied longer or walked more than usual, after my second sleep, and reading an oration or too aloud, instead of using my chariot I get on horseback; by which means I take as much exercise, and lose less time. The visits of my friends from the neighbouring villages claim some part of the day; and sometimes, by an agreeable interruption, they come in very seasonably to relieve me when I am fatigued. I now and then amuse myself with sporting, but always take my tablets into the fields, that though I should not meet with game, I may at least bring home something. Part of my time too (though not so much as they desire) is allotted to my tenants; and I find their rustic complaints give a zest to my studies and engagements of the politer kind. Farewell.

Epist. XXXVH. PLINY to PAULINUS.

AS you are not of a disposition to expect from your friends the common ceremonies of the world, when they cannot observe them without inconvenience to themselves; so I too warmly love you to be apprehensive you will take otherwise than I wish you should, my not waiting upon you on the first day of your entrance upon the consular office; especially as I am detained here by the necessity of letting my farms upon long leases. I am obliged to enter upon an entire new method with my tenants; for under the former leases, though I made them very considerable abatements, they have run greatly in arrear. For this reason several of them have, not only taken no sort of care to lessen a debt, which they found themselves incapable of wholly discharging; but even seized and consumed all the produce of the lands, in the belief that it would now be no advantage to themselves to spare

spare it. I must therefore obviate this increasing evil, and endeavour to find out some remedy against it. The only one I can think of is, not to reserve my rent in money, but in kind, and so place some of my servants to overlook the tillage, and guard the stock; as indeed there is no sort of revenue more agreeable to reason, than what arises from the bounty of the soil, the seasons and the climate. It is true, this method will require great integrity and diligent attendance in the person I appoint my bailiff, and put me to the expence of employing many hands. However, I must hazard the experiment; and, as in an inveterate distemper, try every change of remedy. You see, it is not any pleasurable indulgence, that prevents my attending you on the first day of your consulship. I shall celebrate it nevertheless, as much as if I were present, and pay my vows for you here, with all the warmest sentiments of joy and congratulation. Farewell.

Epist. XXXVIII. PLINY to SATURNINUS.

YES, I sincerely applaud your friend Rufus; not because you desire me, but because I think he highly merits approbation. I have read his very finished performance; to which, though my affection for the author added a considerable recommendation, yet it did not blind my judgment: for the malicious critic is not, I trust, the only judicious reader. Farewell.

Epist. XXXIX. PLINY to MUSTIUS.

IN compliance with the advice of the * aruspices, I intend to rebuild and enlarge the

* The business of the aruspices was, to examine the beasts which were offered in sacrifice, and from thence to foretell the success of any enterprise.

temple of Ceres, which stands upon my estate. It is indeed a very ancient fabric, and though extremely small, yet upon a certain stated anniversary is much frequented. On the 13th of September great numbers of people from all the country round assemble there, at which time many affairs are transacted, and many vows paid and offered; but there is no shelter for them against the inclemency of the weather. I imagine, then, I shall do at once an act of piety and munificence, if at the same time that I build a beautiful temple, I add to it a spacious portico; the first for the service of the goddess, the other for the use of the people. I beg therefore you would purchase for me four marble pillars, of whatever kind you shall think proper; as also a quantity of marble for laying the floor and incrusting the walls. You must likewise either buy a statue of the goddess, or procure one to be made; for age has maimed, in some parts, the ancient one of wood which stands there at present. With respect to the portico, I do not recollect there is any thing you can send me that will be serviceable; unless you will sketch me out a plan suitable to the situation of the place. It is not practicable to build it round the temple, because it is encompassed on one side by the river whose banks are exceedingly steep; and on the other, by the high road. Beyond this road lies a very large meadow, in which the portico may be conveniently enough placed, opposite to the temple; unless you, who know so well how to conquer the inconveniencies of nature, by art, can propose some better situation. Farewell.

Epist. XL. PLINY to FUSCUS.

YOU are much pleased, I find, with the account I gave you in my former * letter, of the manner in which I spend the summer-season at Tusculum ; and desire to know what alteration I make in my method, when I am at Laurentinum in the winter ? None at all, except abridging myself of my sleep at noon, and employing part of the night in study ; and if any cause requires my attendance at Rome, (which in winter very frequently happens), instead of having interludes or music after supper, I meditate upon what I have dictated, and, by often revising it in my own mind, fix it in my memory. Thus I have given you my scheme of life in summer and winter ; to which you may add the intermediate seasons of spring and autumn. As at those times I lose nothing of the day, so I study but little in the night. Farewell.

B O O K X.

Containing PLINY's Epistles to TRAJAN, and those of TRAJAN to PLINY.

Epist. † I. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE dutiful affection you bore, most sacred Emperor, to your august father, made
you

* See let. 36. of this book.

† The greater part of the following letters, were written by Pliny during his administration in the province of Bithynia. They are of a style and character extremely different from those in the preceding collection ; whence some critics have injudiciously
inferred,

you wish it might be late ere you succeeded him. But the immortal gods thought proper to hasten the advancement of those virtues to the helm of the commonwealth, which had already so successfully shared in the conduct of it *. May you then, and the world through your means, enjoy every prosperity worthy of your times ; to which let me add my wishes, most excellent Emperor, upon a private as well as public account,

inferred, that they are the production of another hand ; not considering, that the occasion necessarily required a different manner. In letters of business, as these chiefly are, turn and sentiment would be foreign and impertinent ; politeness and elegance of expression being the essentials that constitute perfection in this kind : and in that view, though they may be less entertaining, they have not less merit than the former. But besides their particular excellence as letters, they have a farther recommendation as so many valuable pieces of history, by throwing a strong light upon the character of one of the most amiable and glorious princes in the Roman annals. Trajan appears throughout, in the most striking attitude that majesty can be placed ; in the exertion of power to the godlike purposes of justice and benevolence : and what one of the ancient historians has said of him, is here clearly verified, that *he rather chose to be loved than flattered by his people*. To have been distinguished by the favour and friendship of a monarch of so exalted a character, is an honour that reflects the brightest lustre upon our author ; as to have been served and celebrated by a courtier of Pliny's genius and virtues, is the noblest monument of glory that could have been raised to Trajan.

* Nerva, who succeeded Domitian, reigned but sixteen months and a few days. Before his death he not only adopted Trajan, and named him for his successor, but actually admitted him into a share of the government, giving him the titles of *Cæsar*, *Germanicus*, and *Imperator*. Vid. Plin. Paneg.

that

that your health and spirits may be preserved firm and unbroken.

Epist. II. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

YOU have occasioned me, Sir, an inexpressible pleasure, by thinking me worthy of enjoying the privilege which the laws confer on those who have three children. For though it was an indulgence to the request of your very affectionate and worthy friend Servilianus, that you granted this favour; yet I have the satisfaction to find by the words of your rescript, that you complied the more willingly, as his application was in my behalf. I cannot but look upon myself as in possession of my utmost wish, after having thus received, at the entrance of your auspicious government, so distinguishing a mark of your peculiar favour; at the same time that it considerably heightens my desire of leaving a family behind me. I was not without this inclination even in those most wretched times *; as my two marriages will easily incline you to believe. But the gods decreed it better, by reserving every valuable privilege to the bounty of your generous dispensations. And indeed the pleasure of being a father will be so much more acceptable to me now, that I can enjoy it in full freedom and security.

Epist. III. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE ample experience, Sir, I have had of your unbounded generosity to me, in my own person, encourages me to hope I may be yet farther obliged to it, in favour of my friends. Voconius Romanus (who lives and was bred up with me) claims the first rank in that number;

* Alluding to the execrable reign of Domitian.

in consequence of which I petitioned your sacred father to promote him to the dignity of the senatorial order. But the completion of my request is reserved to your goodness; for his mother had not then advanced, in the manner the law directs, the four hundred thousand sesterces which she engaged to give him, in her letter to the emperor your late father: This, however, by my advice she has since done, having conveyed to him a sufficient estate in land, with all the necessary formalities. The difficulties therefore being removed which deferred our wishes, it is with full confidence I venture to assure you of the merit of my friend Romanus, heightened and adorned as it is, not only by the liberal and polite arts, but by his extraordinary tenderness to his parents. It is to that virtue he owes the present liberality of his mother, as well as his immediate * succession to his late father's estate, and his having been adopted by his father-in-law. To these personal qualifications, the wealth and rank of his family give an increase of lustre; as I persuade myself it will be some additional recommendation to your favour, that I solicit in his behalf. Let me then entreat you, Sir, to put it in my power to congratulate Romanus; on an occasion so highly agreeable to me; and at the same time to gratify an eager, and I hope a laudable ambition of being able to boast, that your favourable regards are extended, not only to myself, but also to my friend.

* Meaning, perhaps, that though he was under age when his father died, yet he had so much confidence in the prudence of Romanus, that he did not appoint him, as usual, a guardian by his will; but left him to the immediate possession of his estate.

Epist.

Epist. IV. [xx.] * PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

WHEN by your gracious indulgence, Sir,
I was promoted to the head of the
† treasury of Saturn, I immediately renounced
all

* N. B. The following letters, to the 30th, are not ranged in the same order as they are placed in any of the Latin editions; the editor having taken the liberty of changing their situation, for the sake of bringing some letters together which throw a light upon each other. The figures included between this mark [] refer to the order in which they commonly stand.

† The public treasure was kept in the temple of Saturn, where the spoils of the conquered nations were deposited. Julius Cæsar seized upon this temple in the time of the civil war; and what an immense wealth that threw into his hands, may be judged by the elegant description which Lucan gives of the riches it contained.

*At length the sacred storehouse open laid,
The hoarded wealth of ages past display'd:
There might be seen the sums proud Carthage sent,
Her long impending ruin to prevent;
There heap'd the Macedonian treasures shone,
What great Flaminius and Æmilius won
From vanquish'd Philip, and his helpless son.
There lay what flying Pyrrhus lost, the gold
Scorn'd by the patriot's honesty of old;
Whate'er our parsimonious fires could save:
What tributary gifts rich Syria gave;
The hundred Cretan cities ample spoil;
What Cato gather'd from the Cyprian isle.
Riches of captive kings by Pompey born
In happier days his triumph to adorn,
From utmost India, and the rising morn;
Wealth infinite!*

Lucan. iii. 155.
Pliny

all engagements of the bar, (as indeed I never blended business of that kind with the functions of the state), that no avocations might call off my attention from the post to which I was appointed. For this reason when the people of Africa petitioned that I might undertake their cause against Marius Priscus, I excused myself from that office; and accordingly my excuse was admitted. But when afterwards the consul elect proposed, that the senate should apply to us again, and endeavour to prevail with us to yield to its inclinations, and suffer our names to be thrown into the * urn, I thought it most suitable to that tranquillity and good order which so happily distinguishes your times, not to oppose (especially in so reasonable an article) the will of that august assembly. And, as I am desirous that all my words and actions may be approved by your ex-

Pliny the elder has given a particular account of this treasure which Cæsar seized, both in gold and silver plate and in coin; the amount of which, according to Dr Arbuthnot's computation, is 1,093,979 l. 3 s. 4 d. But if there is no mistake in these sums, Cæsar did not take away by far so much as he brought in; for Plutarch relates, that he placed at one time in the treasury 65,000 talents; which, according to the same ingenious author's calculation, is equivalent to 12,593,750 pounds. Arb. Tab. 191.

* Other senators, as well as Pliny, had excused themselves, it seems, from undertaking the management of this cause: it was proposed therefore, that they should cast lots; which is the meaning of "suffering their names to be thrown into an urn;" being made use of in decisions of this kind. Accordingly the lot fell upon our author, and his great friend the famous Cornelius Tacitus. See b. 2. let. 11. where there is a full account of this trial.

emplary

emplary virtue, I hope you will think my compliance was proper.

Epist. V. [xxi.] The Emperor TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU acted as became a good citizen and a worthy senator, by paying obedience to the just injunctions of that august assembly: and I have full confidence you will faithfully discharge the part you have undertaken.

Epist. VI. [iv.] PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

HAVING been attacked last year by a severe and dangerous illness, I employed a * physician, whose care and diligence, Sir, I cannot sufficiently reward, but by your gracious assistance. I entreat you therefore to make him a † denizen of Rome; for as he is the freedman of a foreigner, he is, consequently, himself also a foreigner. His name is Harpocras; his patroness (who has been dead a considerable time) was Thermuthis the daughter of Theon. I farther entreat you to bestow the full privileges of a Roman citizen upon Helia and Antonia Harmer's

* The physicians among the ancients were distinguished according to the particular branch of practice to which they confined themselves. The physician here mentioned, Pliny calls *iatriaptes*, that is, one who applied external unctions.

† There was a difference between the *jus civitatis* and the *jus Quiritium*; the former not extending to the same privileges as the latter, which comprehended whatever advantages a free native of Rome was entitled to; just in the same manner as with us, there is a distinction between denization and naturalization.

the freedwomen of Antonia Maximilla, a lady of great merit. It is at her desire * I make this request.

Epist. VII. [xxii.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

I Return you thanks, Sir, for your ready compliance with my desire, in granting the complete privileges of a Roman, to the freedwomen of a lady to whom I am allied, and making Harpocras my physician a denizen of Rome. But when, agreeable to your directions, I gave in an account of his age and estate, I was informed by those who are better skilled in these affairs than I pretend to be, that, as he is an Egyptian, I ought first to have obtained for him the freedom of Alexandria, before he was made free of Rome. I confess, indeed, as I was ignorant of any difference in this case between those of † Egypt and other countries, I contented myself with only acquainting you, that he had been manumized by a foreign lady, long since deceased. However, it is an ignorance I cannot regret, since it affords me an opportunity of receiving from you a double

* Pliny mentions his request to be at the particular desire of Maximilla, because nothing of this kind could legally be granted to a freedman, without the consent of his patron; a name which was given to the master of a slave who had been made free.

† Upon what occasion the honour of this peculiar distinction was granted in favour of Alexandria does not appear; possibly it might be in gratitude to a country to which the Romans were so highly obliged, being supplied with the greatest part of their corn from Egypt. This city, founded by Alexander the Great, was esteemed the most considerable in the world next to that of Rome. It is now called *Scanderick*.

obligation

obligation in favour of the same person. That I may legally therefor enjoy the benefit of your goodness, I beg you would be pleased to grant him the freedom of the city of Alexandria, as well as that of Rome. And that your gracious intentions may not meet with any farther obstacles, I have taken care, as you directed, to send an account to your freedman of his age and fortunes.

Epist. VIII. [xxiii.] The Emperor TRAJAN to PLINY.

IT is my resolution, in pursuance of the maxim observed by the princes my predecessors, to be extremely cautious in granting the freedom of the city of Alexandria: However, since you have obtained of me the freedom of Rome for your physician Harpocras, I cannot refuse you this other request. You must let me know to what district he belongs, that I may give you a letter to my good friend Pompeius Planta, governor of Egypt.

Epist. IX. [v.] PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Cannot express, Sir, the pleasure your letter gave me, by which I am informed that you have made my physician Harpocras a denizen of Alexandria; notwithstanding your resolution to follow the maxim of your predecessors in this point, by being extremely cautious in granting that privilege. Agreeably to your directions, I acquaint you that Harpocras belongs to the district of Memphis. I entreat you then, most gracious Emperor, to send me, as you promised, a letter to your good friend Pompeius Planta, governor of Egypt.

As I purpose (in order to have the earliest enjoyment of your presence, so ardently wished for

here) to come to meet you ; I beg, Sir, you would permit me to extend my journey as far as possible.

Epist. X. [vi.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

I Was greatly obliged, Sir, in my late indisposition, to Polthumius Marinus, my physician ; and I can only make him a suitable return, by the assistance of your gracious indulgence. I entreat you then to make Chrysippus Mithridates and his wife Stratonica, (who are related to Marinus), denizens of Rome. I implore likewise the same privilege in favour of Epigonus and Mithridates, the two sons of Chrysippus ; but in such manner, * that they may be under the dominion of their father, and yet preserve their right of patronage over their own freedmen. I farther entreat you to grant the full privileges of a Roman

* The extensive power of paternal authority was (as has been observed in the notes above) peculiar to the Romans. But after Chrysippus was made a denizen of Rome, he was not, it should seem, consequentially entitled to that privilege over those children which were born before his denization. On the other hand, if it was expressly granted him, his children could not preserve their right of patronage over their own freedmen, because that right would of course devolve to their father, by means of this acquired dominion over them. The denization therefore of his children is as expressly solicited as his own. But both parties becoming *Quirites*, the children by this creation, and not pleading in right of their father, would be *patres fam.* To prevent which the clause is added, *ita ut sint in patris potestate* ; as there is another to save to them their rights of patronage over their freedmen, though they were reduced in *patriam potestatem*.

to L. Satrius Abascantius, P. Cæsius Phosphorus, and Pancharia Soteris. This request I make with the consent of their patrons.

Epist. XI. [xxiv.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

AFTER your late sacred father, Sir, had, in a noble speech, as well as by his own generous example, exhorted and encouraged the public to acts of munificence; I implored his permission to remove the several statues which I had of the former emperors, to * my corporation; and at the same time begged the liberty of adding his own to the number. For as I had hitherto continued them in the respective places wherein they stood when they were left to me by several different inheritances, they were dispersed in distant parts of my estate. He was pleased to grant my request, and at the same time to give me a very ample testimony of his approbation. I immediately therefore wrote to the decurii, that they would allot a piece of ground, upon which I might build a temple at my own expense; but as a mark of honour to my design, they offered me the choice of any site I thought proper. However, my own indisposition in the first place, and afterward that of your father, together with the duties of that post with which you were both pleased to intrust me, prevented my going on with that design. But I have now, I think, a convenient opportunity of making an excursion for that purpose, as my monthly attendance

* It is highly probable, upon comparing Jer. 4. b. 3. and Jer. 1. b. 4. that by the corporation here mentioned, Pliny means Tifernum. Tiberinum, or Citta di Castella, as it is now called; which city had put itself under his patronage and protection.

ends on the first of * September, and there are several festivals in the month following. My first request then is, that you would permit me to adorn the temple I am going to erect, with your statue; and next (in order to execute my design with all the expedition possible) that you would indulge me with leave of absence. It would ill become the sincerity I profess, were I to dissemble, that your goodness in complying with this desire, will at the same time be extremely serviceable to me in my own private affairs. It is absolutely necessary I should not defer any longer the letting of my lands in that province; for, besides that they amount to above † four hundred thousand sesterces, the time for dressing the vineyards is approaching, and that care must fall upon my new tenants. The badness of the season likewise for several years past, obliges me to think of making some abatements in my rents; which I cannot possibly settle unless I am present. I shall be indebted then to your indulgence, Sir,

* Pliny enjoyed the office of treasurer in conjunction with Cornutus Tertullus. It was the custom at Rome for those who had colleagues to administer the duties of their posts by monthly turns. *Buchnerus*.

† About 3200 l. Sterling; the annual income of Pliny's estate in Tuscany. He mentions another near Comum in the duchy of Milan, the yearly value of which does not appear. We find him likewise considering about the purchase of an estate, for which he wants to give about 24,000 l. of our money; but whether he ever completed that purchase, is uncertain. [See book 3. let. 19.]. This however we are sure of, that his fortunes were but moderate, considering his high station and necessary expenses: [See book 2. let. 4.]; and yet, by the advantage of a judicious œconomy, we have seen him, in the course of these letters, exercising a liberality, of which after-ages have furnished no parallel.

both

both as forwarding this public act of piety, and giving me the opportunity of settling my private affairs, if you will be pleased to grant me * leave to be absent for thirty days. I cannot limit a shorter time, as the town and the estate of which I am speaking, lie above an hundred and fifty miles from Rome.

Epist. XII. [xxv.] TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU have given me many reasons both of a public and private nature, why you desire leave to be absent; but I need no other than that it is your inclination: and I doubt not of your returning as soon as possible to the duty of an office which so much requires your attendance. As I would not seem to check any instance of your affection towards me, I shall not oppose your erecting my statue in the place you mention; though, in general, I am extremely cautious in giving any encouragement to honours of that kind.

Epist. XIII. [viii.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

AS I am sensible, Sir, that the highest applause my actions can receive, is to be distinguished by so excellent a prince; I beg you would be graciously pleased to add either the office of augur or septemvir (both which are now vacant) to the dignity I already enjoy by your indulgence; that I may have the satisfaction of

* The senators were not allowed to go from Rome into the provinces, without having first obtained leave of the emperor. Sicily, however, had the privilege to be excepted out of that law; as Gallia Narbonensis afterwards was, by Claudius Cæsar. Tacit. ann. 12. c. 23.

publicly offering up those vows for your prosperity, from the duty of my office, which I daily prefer to the gods in private, from the affection of my heart.

Epist. XIV. [xxvi.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

HAVING safely passed the promontory of Mælea, I am arrived at Ephesus with all my train, notwithstanding I was detained for some time by contrary winds: an information, Sir, in which, I trust, you will think yourself concerned. I design to pursue the remainder of my journey to the * province, partly in light vessels, and partly in post-chaises: for as the excessive heats will prevent my travelling altogether by land, so the Etesian winds, which are now set in, will not permit me to proceed entirely by sea.

Epist. XV. [xxvii.] TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOUR information, my dear Pliny, was extremely agreeable to me; as it is much my concern to know in what manner you arrive at your province. I well approve of your intention to travel either by sea or land, as you shall find most convenient.

* Bithynia, a province in Anatolia, or Asia the Less, of which Pliny was appointed governor by Trajan, in the 6th year of his reign, A. D. 103; not as an ordinary proconsul, but as that emperor's own lieutenant, with extraordinary powers. [See Dio.] The following letters were written during his administration of that province.



Epist.

Epist. XVI. [xxviii.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

AS I had a very favourable voyage to Ephesus, so in travelling post from thence I was extremely incommoded by the heats, which threw me into a fever, and kept me some time at Pergamum. From thence, Sir, I took ship again; but being detained by contrary winds, I did not arrive at Bithynia so soon as I hoped *. However, I have no reason to complain of this delay, since (which indeed was the most auspicious circumstance that could attend me) I reached the province in time to celebrate your birthday. I am at present engaged in examining into the finances of the Prusenses, their disbursements and credits; and the farther I proceed in this affair, the more I am convinced of the necessity of my inquiry. Several large sums of money are owing to the city from private persons, which they neglect to pay upon various pretences; as, on the other hand, I find the public funds are, in some instances, very unwarrantably applied. This, Sir, I write to you immediately on my arrival. I entered this province on the 17th of † September,

* The original adds, *id est, xv Calend. Octobris*, which seems to have crept into the text from the marginal annotation of some glossarist: for as Pliny mentions the time of his arrival a little lower, there is no occasion for it in this place; and it is not agreeable to his usual elegant conciseness, to repeat that circumstance twice in the same letter. Or perhaps here are two distinct letters run into one by the carelessness of the transcribers; the former ending with *Hæc, &c. in ipso ingressu meo scripsi*; the latter beginning with *Quintodecimo Calend. &c.*

† In the sixth year of Trajan's reign, A. D. 103,
and

ber, and found it in those sentiments of obedience and loyalty, which you justly merit from all mankind. You will consider, Sir, whether it would not be proper to send hither a surveyor; for I am inclined to think, much might be deducted from what is charged by those who have the conduct of the public works, if a faithful admeasurement were to be taken: at least I am of that opinion from what I have already seen of the accounts of this city, which I am now examining, with the assistance of Maximus.

Epist. XVII. [xxix.] TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Should have rejoiced to have heard, that you arrived at Bithynia without inconvenience to yourself or any of your train; and that your journey from Ephesus had been as easy, as your voyage to that place was favourable. For the rest, your letter informs me, my dear Pliny, what day you reached Bithynia. The people of that province will be convinced, I persuade myself, that I am attentive to their interest; as your conduct towards them will make it manifest, that I could have chosen no person more proper to supply my place. Your first inquiry ought, no doubt, to turn upon the state of the public finances; for that they have been abused, is but too evident. I have scarce surveyors enough to inspect those works which I am carrying on at Rome, and in the neighbourhood: but persons of integrity and skill in this art may be found, most certainly, in every province; so that you cannot be at a loss in that point, if you will make due inquiry.

and the 41st of our author's age: he continued in this province about eighteen months. Vid. Mass. in vit. Plin. 129.

Epist

Epist. XVIII. [vii.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

THough I am well assured, Sir, that you, who never forget any opportunity of exerting your generosity, are not unmindful of the request I lately made you; yet since you have frequently, among many other instances of your indulgence, permitted me to repeat my solicitations to you, I do so now on behalf of Accius Sura; and I earnestly beseech you to honour him with the prætorship, which is at present vacant. Though his ambition is extremely moderate, yet the quality of his birth, the inflexible integrity which he has shewn in a fortune below mediocrity, and, above all, the happiness of your times, which gives courage to conscious virtue to claim the indulgence of your favour, prompts him to hope he may experience it in this instance.

Epist. XIX. [ix.] PLINY to the Emperor TRA-
JAN.

I Congratulate both you and the public, most excellent Emperor, upon the great and glorious victory you have obtained; so agreeable to the heroism of ancient Rome. May the immortal gods give the same happy success to all your designs, that, under the administration of so many princely virtues, the splendour of the empire may shine out, not only in its former, but with additional lustre*.

* It is probable the victory here alluded to, was that famous one which Trajan gained over the Dacians. It is certain at least, Pliny lived to see his wish accomplished, this emperor having carried the Roman splendour to its highest pitch, and extended the dominions of the empire farther than any of his predecessors; as after his death it began to decline.

Epist.

Epist. XX. [x.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

MY lieutenant Servilius Pudens came to Nicomedia, Sir, on the 24th of November; and by his arrival freed me, at last, from the solicitude of a very uneasy expectation.

Epist. XXI. [xi.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

YOur generosity to me, Sir, was the occasion of uniting me to Roslanus Geminus, by the strongest ties; for he was my quæstor when I was consul. His behaviour to me during the continuance of our offices, was highly respectful; and he has treated me ever since with so peculiar a regard, that besides the many obligations I owe him upon a public account, I am indebted to him for the strongest pledges of private friendship. I entreat you then to comply with my request for the advancement of one, whom (if my recommendation has any weight) you will even honour with your particular favour; as whatever trust you shall repose in him, he will endeavour to shew himself still deserving of an higher. But I forbear to enter into a more particular detail of his merit; being persuaded, his integrity, his probity, and his vigilance are well known to you, not only from those high posts which he has exercised in Rome within your immediate inspection, but from his behaviour when he served under you in the army. One thing, however, my affection for him inclines me to think I have not yet sufficiently done; and therefore, Sir, I repeat my entreaties to you, that you will give me the pleasure, as early as possible, of rejoicing in the honourable advancement of my quæstor; or, in
other

other words, of receiving an addition to my own dignity, in the person of my friend.

Epist. XXII. [xii.] PLINY to TRAJAN.

IT is not easy, Sir, to express the joy I received, when I heard you had, in compliance with the request of my mother-in-law and myself, granted Cælius Clemens the proconsulship of this province, after the expiration of his consular office; as it is from thence I learn the full extent of your beneficence towards me, which thus graciously spreads itself through my whole family. I dare not pretend to make an equal return to those obligations I so justly owe you. I can only therefore have recourse to vows, and ardently implore the gods, that I may not be found unworthy of those favours which you are continually bestowing upon me.

Epist. XXIII. [xiii.] PLINY to TRAJAN.

I Received, Sir, a dispatch from your freedman Lycormas, desiring me, if any embassy from Eosphorus should come hither in the way to Rome, that I would detain it till his arrival. None has yet arrived; at least in the city where I am. But a courier passing through this place from the king of Sarmatia, I lay hold of that opportunity, which accidentally offers itself, of sending with him the messenger which Lycormas dispatched hither; that you might be informed by both their letters of what, perhaps, it may be necessary you should be acquainted with at one and the same time.

Epist. XXIV. [xiv.] PLINY to TRAJAN.

I Am informed by a letter from the king of Sarmatia, that some affairs have happened

that require your immediate knowledge. With design therefore to expedite the dispatches which his courier was charged with to you, I granted him an order to make use of the public post *.

Epist. XXV. [xv.] PLINY to TRAJAN.

THE ambassador from the king of Sarmatia having voluntarily staid two days at Nicea, where he found me, I did not think it reasonable, Sir, to detain him any longer; not only because it was still uncertain when your freedman Lycormas would arrive, but as some indispensable affairs require my presence in a different part of the province. Of this I thought it necessary that you should be informed, because I lately acquainted you in a letter, that Lycormas had de-

* The first invention of public couriers is ascribed to Cyrus, who, in order to receive the earliest intelligence from the governors of the several provinces, erected posthouses throughout the kingdom of Persia, at equal distances, which supplied men and horses to forward the public dispatches. Augustus was the first who introduced this most useful institution among the Romans, by employing post-chaises, disposed at convenient distances, for the purpose of political intelligence. The magistrates of every city were obliged to furnish horses for these messengers, upon producing a diploma, or a kind of warrant, either from the emperor himself, or from those who had that authority under him. Sometimes, though upon very extraordinary occasions, persons who travelled upon their private affairs, were allowed the use of these post-chaises. [See epist. 121. of this book]. It is surprising they were not sooner used for the purposes of commerce and private communication. Louis XI. first established them in France, in the year 1474; but it was not till the 12th of Car. II. that the post-office was settled in England by act of parliament.

fixed,

fired, if any embassy should come this way from Bosphorus, that I would detain it till his arrival. But I did not see there was any pretence of retarding him any longer; especially as the dispatches from Lycornas which (as I mentioned before) I was not willing to detain, would probably reach you some days sooner than this ambassador.

Epist. XXVI. [xvi.] PLINY to TRAJAN.

I Received a letter, Sir, from Apuleius, an officer in the army, belonging to the garrison at Nicomedia, informing me that one Callidromus being arrested by Maximus and Dionysius, (two persons who exercise the trade of bakers, to whom he had hired himself), fled for refuge to your statue *: that being brought before a magistrate, he declared he was formery slave to Laberius Maximus; but being taken prisoner by Sufagus in Moesia, he was sent as a present from Decebalus to Pacorus king of Parthia, in whose service he continued several years, from whence he made his escape, and came to Nicomedia. When he was examined before me, he confirmed this account; for which reason I thought it

* Particular temples, altars, and statues were allowed among the Romans as places of privilege and sanctuary to slaves, debtors, and malefactors. This custom was introduced by Romulus, who borrowed it probably from the Greeks; but, during the free state of Rome, few of these asylums were permitted. This custom prevailed most under the emperors, till it grew so scandalous, that the emperor Pius found it necessary to restrain those privileged places by an edict. See Lipsii excurs. ad Tacitan. 3. c. 36.

necessary to * send him to you. This I should have done sooner, but I deferred his journey in order to make an inquiry after a gem which he said was taken from him, upon which was engraven the figure of Pacorus in his royal habit: I was desirous (if it could have been found) of transmitting this curiosity to you at the same time; as I have a small ingot of Parthian gold, which he says he brought from thence out of the mines. I have fixed my seal to it, the impression of which is a chariot drawn by four horses.

Epist. XXVII. [xvii.] PLINY to TRAJAN.

YOUR freedman and procurator, Maximus, behaved, Sir, during all the time we were together, with great probity, care, and diligence; as one strongly attached to your interest, and strictly observant of discipline. This testimony I willingly give him; and I do it with all the fidelity I owe you.

Epist. XXVIII. [xviii.] PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

AFTER having experienced, Sir, in Gabius Bassus, who commands on the frontiers of Pontica, the greatest integrity, honour, and vigilance, as well as the most particular respect to myself, I cannot refuse him my best wishes and suffrage; and I give them to him with all that fidelity which is due to you. I have found

* The second expedition of Trajan against Decebalus, was undertaken the same year that Pliny went governor into this province: the reason therefore why Pliny sent this Callidromus to the Emperor seems to be, that some use might possibly be made of him in favour of that design.

him

him abundantly qualified by having served in the army under you; and it is owing to the advantages of your discipline, that he has learned to merit the honour of your favour. The soldiery and the people here, who have had full experience of his justice and humanity, endeavour to rival each other in that glorious testimony they give of him, as well in public as in private; and I certify this with all the sincerity you have a right to expect from me.

Epist. XXIX. [xix.] PLINY to TRAJAN.

Nymphidius Lupus *, Sir, and myself served in the army together; he commanded a body of the auxiliary forces at the same time that I was military tribune; and it was from thence my affection for him began. A long acquaintance hath since mutually endeared and strengthened our friendship. For this reason I did violence to his repose, and insisted upon his attending me into Bithynia, as my assessor in council. He most readily granted me this proof of his friendship; and without any regard to the plea of age, or the ease of retirement, he shared with me the fatigue of business; and upon all occasions is still ready to give me his assistance. I look upon his relations therefore as my own; in which number Nymphidius Lupus, his son, claims my particular notice. He is a youth of great merit and indefatigable application; and, in every view of his character, well worthy of so excellent a father. That he is equal to any

* The text calls him *Primipilarem*; that is, one who had been *Primipilus*, an officer in the army; whose post was both highly honourable and profitable. Among other parts of his office he had the care of the eagle, or chief standard of the legion.

honour you shall think proper to confer upon him, the early proof he gave of his qualifications, when he commanded the troops of the allies, will easily convince you; as it gained him the full applause of those most illustrious personages Julius Ferox, and Fuscus Salinator. And I will add, Sir, that any increase of dignity which he shall receive, will be an occasion of particular congratulation to myself.

Epist. XXX. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Beg your determination, Sir, in a point wherein I am greatly doubtful. It is, whether I should place the public slaves as centinels round the prisons of the several cities in this province, (as has been hitherto the practice), or employ a party of soldiers for that purpose? On the one hand, I am afraid the public slaves will not attend this duty with the fidelity they ought; and, on the other, that it will engage too large a body of the soldiery: in the mean while, I have joined a few of the latter with the former. I suspect, however, there may be some danger that this method will occasion a general neglect of duty, as it will afford them a mutual pretence of throwing the blame upon each other.

Epist. XXXI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THere is no occasion, my dear Pliny, to draw off any * soldiers in order to guard the pri-

* In the original it is *commilitones*, “my fellow-soldiers:” an appellation which those emperors who desired to be well with the army affected to use. Suetonius informs us, that Augustus would never employ that expression, as thinking it a condescension unbecoming his dignity; and neither suitable to the tranquillity of the times, nor to military discipline.

sons.

sons. Let us rather persevere in the ancient customs observed by this province, of employing the public slaves for that purpose : and the fidelity with which they shall execute their duty, will depend much upon your care and strict discipline. It is greatly to be feared, as you observe, if the soldiers should be mixed with the public slaves, they will mutually trust to each other, and by that means grow so much the more negligent. But the principal objection I have, is, that as few soldiers as possible should be called off from their colours.

Epist. XXXII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

GAbius Bassus, who commands upon the frontiers of Pontica, in a manner suitable to the respect and duty which he owes you, has been with me, Sir, for several days. As far as I could observe, he is a person of great merit and worthy of your favour. I acquainted him it was your order that he should retain only ten * beneficiary soldiers, two horse-guards, and one captain out of the troops which you were pleased to assign to my command. He assured me these

* The most probable conjecture (for it is a point of a good deal of obscurity) concerning the *beneficiarii*, seems to be, that they were a certain number of soldiers exempted from the usual duty of their office, in order to be employed as a sort of body-guards to the general. These were probably foot ; as the *equites* here mentioned were perhaps of the same nature, only that they served on horseback. *Equites singulares Cæsaris, Augusti, &c.* are frequently met with upon ancient inscriptions, and are generally supposed to mean the body-guards of the emperor.

would

would not be sufficient for him, and that he would write to you upon this head: for which reason I did not immediately, upon your directions, recall his supernumeraries.

Epist. XXXIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Have received from Gabius Bassus the letter you mention, acquainting me that the number of soldiers I had ordered him was not sufficient: and for your information I have directed my answer to be annexed to this. It is very material to distinguish between what the exigency of affairs requires, and what an ambitious desire of extending power may think necessary. As for ourselves, the interest of the public must be our only guide: accordingly it is incumbent upon us to take all possible care, that the soldiers are not absent from their colours.

Epist. XXXIV. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

THE Prusenses, Sir, have an ancient and ruinous bath, which they desire your leave to repair. Upon examining into the condition of it, I find it ought to be rebuilt. I think therefore you may indulge them in this request, as there will be a sufficient fund for that purpose, partly from those debts which are due from * private persons to the public, which I am now calling in; and partly from what they raise among themselves towards furnishing the bath with oil, which they are willing to apply to the carrying on of this building: a work which the dignity of the city, and the splendour of your times seems to demand.

* See letter 28. of this book.

Epist. XXXV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IF the erecting a public bath will not be too great a charge upon the Prusenses, we may comply with their request; provided, however, that no new tax be levied for this purpose, nor any of those taken off which are applied for necessary services.

Epist. XXXVI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Am assured, Sir, by your freedman and receiver-general Maximus, that it is necessary he should have a party of soldiers assigned to him, over and besides the *beneficarii* *, which, by your orders, I allotted to the very worthy Gemellinus. Those therefore which I found in his service I thought proper to continue there, especially as he was going into Paphlagonia in order to procure corn. For his better security likewise, and because it was his request, I added two of the horse-guards. But I beg you would inform me, in your next dispatches, what method you would have me observe for the future in points of this nature.

Epist. XXXVII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

AS my freedman Maximus was going upon an extraordinary commission to procure corn, I approve of your having supplied him with a file of soldiers. But when he shall return to the duties of his former post, I think two from you, and as many from my receiver-general Virtilis Gemellinus, (to whom he is coadjutor), will be sufficient.

* See letter 32. of this book in note.

Epist. XXXVIII. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

SEmpronius Cælianus, (whose merit I must always mention with esteem), having discovered two * slaves among the recruits, has sent them to me. But I deferred passing sentence till I had conferred with you, the glorious founder and firm support of military discipline, concerning the punishment proper to be inflicted upon them. My principal doubt is, that though they have taken the military oath, they are not yet entered into any particular legion. I beg therefore, Sir, you would let me know what method I shall pursue, especially as it is an affair in which example is concerned.

* The Roman policy excluded slaves from entering into military service, and it was death if they did so. However, upon cases of great necessity, this maxim was dispensed with; but then they were first made free before they were received into the army, excepting only (as Servius in his notes upon Virgil observes) after the fatal battle of Cannæ; when the public distress was so great, that the Romans recruited their army with their slaves, though they had not time to give them their freedom. One reason, perhaps, of this policy might be, that they did not think it safe to arm so considerable a body of men, whose numbers in the times when the Roman luxury was highest, we may have some idea of, by the instance which Pliny the naturalist mentions of Claudius Isodorus, who at the time of his death was possessed of no less than 4116 slaves, notwithstanding he had lost great numbers in the civil wars. *Plin. Hist. Nat.* 33. 10. *Meursius de luxu Rom.*

Epist. XXXIX. TRAJAN to PLINY.

S Empronius Cælianus has acted agreeably to my orders, in sending such persons to be tried before you as appear to deserve capital punishment. It is material however, in the case in question, to inquire, whether these slaves insisted themselves voluntarily, or were chosen by the officers, or presented as proxies for others. If they were chosen, the officer is guilty; if they are proxies, the blame rests with those who deputed them; but if, conscious of the legal incapacities of their station, they presented themselves voluntarily, the punishment must fall upon their own heads. That they are not yet entered into any legion, makes no great difference in their case; for they ought to have given a true account of themselves immediately upon their being approved as fit for the service.

Epist. XL. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

AS I have your permission, Sir, to address myself to you in all my doubts, you will not esteem it below your dignity to descend to those affairs which concern the administration of my post. I find there are in several cities, particularly those of Nicomedia and Nicea, certain persons who take upon themselves to act as public slaves, and receive an annual stipend accordingly; notwithstanding they have been condemned either to the mines, the * public games, or other punishments of the like nature. Ha-

* A punishment among the Romans, usually inflicted upon slaves, by which they were to engage with wild beasts, or perform the part of gladiators in the public shews.

ving received information of this abuse, I have been long debating with myself how I should act. On the one hand, to send them back again to their respective punishments, (many of them being now grown old, and behaving, as I am assured, with sobriety and modesty), would, I thought, be proceeding against them too severely; on the other, to retain convicted criminals in the public service, seemed not altogether so decent. I considered at the same time, to support these people in idleness, would be an useless expense to the public; and to leave them to starve, would be dangerous. I was obliged therefore to suspend the determination of this matter, till I could consult with you. You will be desirous, perhaps, to be informed how it happened that these persons escaped the punishments to which they were condemned. This inquiry I have also made myself, but cannot return you any satisfactory answer. The decrees against them were indeed produced; but no record appears of their having ever been reversed. It was asserted, however, that these people were pardoned upon their petition to the proconsuls, or their lieutenants; which seems likely enough to be the truth, as it is improbable any person should have dared to set them at liberty without authority.

Epist. XLI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU will remember you were sent into Bithynia, for the particular purpose of correcting these many abuses with which it appeared to be over-run. Now none stands more in need of reformation, than that criminals, who have been sentenced to punishment, should, not only be set at liberty (as your letter informs me) without authority; but even appointed to employments,

ployments, which ought alone to be exercised by persons whose characters are irreproachable. Those therefore among them who have been convicted within these ten years, and whose sentence has not been reversed by proper authority, must be sent back again to their respective punishments: but where more than ten years have elapsed since their conviction, and they are grown old and infirm, let them be disposed of in such employments as are but few degrees removed from the punishments to which they were sentenced; that is, either to attend upon the public baths, cleanse the common shores, or repair the streets and highways, the usual offices to which such persons are assigned.

Epist. XLII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

WHILE I was making a progress in a different part of the province, a prodigious fire broke out at Nicomedia, which not only consumed several private houses, but also two public buildings, the town-house and the temple of Isis, though they stood on contrary sides of the street. The occasion of its spreading thus far, was partly owing to the violence of the wind, and partly to the indolence of the people, who, I am well assured, stood fixed and idle spectators of this terrible calamity. The truth is, the city was not provided either with * engines, buckets, or

* It has been generally imagined that the ancients had not the art of raising water by engines; but this passage seems to favour the contrary opinion. The word in the original is *siphō*, which Heiychius explains (as one of the commentators observe,) *instrumentum ad jaculandas aquas adversus incendia*; “an instrument to throw up water against fires.” But there is a passage in Seneca which seems to put this

or any one single instrument proper to extinguish fires; which I have now however given directions to have prepared. You will consider, Sir, whether it may not be adviseable to institute a company of firemen, consisting only of one hundred and fifty members. I will take care none but those of that business shall be admitted into it; and that the privileges granted them shall not be extended to any other purpose. As this incorporated body will consist of so small a number, it will be easy enough to keep them under proper regulation.

Epist. XLIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU are of opinion it would be proper to constitute a company of firemen in Nicomedia, agreeably to what has been practised in several other cities. But it is to be remembered, that this sort of societies have greatly disturbed the peace of that province in general, and of those cities in particular. Whatever name we give them, and for whatever purposes they may be founded, they will not fail to form themselves into assemblies, however short their meetings may be. It will therefore be safer, to provide such machines as are of service in extinguishing fires, injoining the owners of houses to assist up-

matter beyond conjecture, though none of the critics upon this place have taken notice of it: *Solemus*, says he, *duabus manibus inter se junctis aquam concipere, et compressa utrinque palma in modum siphonis exprimere*, [Q. N. l. 2. 16.]; where we plainly see the use of this *sipho* was to throw up water, and consequently the Romans were acquainted with that art. The account which Pliny gives of his fountains at *Tusculum* is likewise another evident proof.

on such occasions; and if it shall be necessary, to call in the help of the populace.

Epist. XLIV. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

WE have acquitted, Sir, and renewed our * vows, for your prosperity, in which that of the public is necessarily included; imploring the gods to grant us ever thus to pay, and thus to repeat them.

Epist. XLV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Received the satisfaction, my dear Pliny, of being informed by your letter, that you, together with the people under your government, have both paid and renewed your vows to the immortal gods, for my health and happiness.

Epist. XLVI. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

THE city of Nicomedia, Sir, have expended three millions three hundred and twenty nine sesterces building an aquæduct; but, not being able to finish it, the works are entirely falling to ruin. They made a second attempt in another place, where they laid out two millions. But this likewise is discontinued; so that, after having been at an immense charge to no purpose, they must still be at a farther expense, in order to be accommodated with water. I have examined a fine spring from whence the water may be conveyed over arches (as was done in their first design), in such a manner that the

* This was an anniversary custom observed throughout the empire, on the 30th of December.

higher, as well as level and low parts of the city may be supplied. There are but very few of the old arches remaining; the square stones, however, employed in the former building, may be used in turning the new ones. I am of opinion part should be raised with brick, as that is the easier and cheaper method. But that the work may not be carried on with the same success as the former, it will be necessary to send here an architect and an engineer. And I will venture to say, from the beauty and usefulness of the design, it will be a work well worthy the splendour of your times.

Epist. XLVII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

CARE must be taken to supply the city of Nicomedia with water; and you will do so, I am well persuaded, with all the diligence you ought. But it is most certainly no less incumbent upon you to examine, by whose misconduct it has happened, that such large sums have been thrown away upon this work, lest, by applying the money to private purposes, this aquæduct should likewise be left unfinished. You will let me know the result of your inquiry.

Epist. XLVIII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE citizens of Nicea, Sir, are building a theatre, which, though it is not yet finished, has already exhausted, as I am informed, (for I have not examined the account myself), above * ten millions of sesterces; and what is worse, I fear

* About 80,000 l. of our money. To those who are not acquainted with the immense riches of the ancients,

fear to no purpose. For either from the foundation being laid in a marshy ground, or that the stones themselves were decayed, the walls are cracked from top to bottom. It deserves your consideration therefore, whether it be best to carry on this work, or entirely discontinue it; or rather, perhaps, whether it would not be most prudent absolutely to destroy it: for the foundations upon which this building is immediately supported, appear to me more expensive than solid. Several private persons have undertaken to build the compartments of this theatre at their own expense, some engaging to erect the portico, others the galleries beyond the pit *: but this design cannot be executed, as the principal fabric is now at a stand. This
city

ancients, it may seem incredible, that a city, not the capital one neither, of a conquered province, should expend so large a sum of money, upon only the shell (as it appears to be) of a theatre: but Asia was esteemed the most considerable part of the world for wealth; its fertility and exportations (as Tully observes) exceeding that of all other countries. The ingenious Dr Arbuthnot quotes an instance from Athenæus of Asiatic riches, which a man must be a tolerable arithmetician even to count. It is the value of the treasure of Sardanapalus, with which he made a funeral pile for himself and family when he was besieged by Arbaces king of the Medes. “Athenæus makes
“ the value of the treasure of this pile to amount to
“ 100,000,000 talents, which reckoned in Babylonian
“ talents, amounts to 16,953,125,000 l. This was
“ only the value of the silver; there was besides a
“ tenth part of that number of talents of gold, which,
“ if gold was reckoned in a decuple proportion, will
“ just double that sum.” *Arbuth. anc. coins.*
p. 203.

* The word *cavea* in the original, comprehends more than we call the *pit* in our theatres, as it means

city is also rebuilding, upon a more enlarged plan, the gymnasium *, which was burnt down before my arrival in the province. They have already been at some (and, I doubt, a fruitless) expence. The structure is not only irregular and ill disposed, but the present architect (who it must be owned is a rival to the person who was first employed) asserts, that the walls, though they are twenty-two feet thick, are not strong enough to support the superstructure, as they are not incrusted without, nor the intermediate space properly cemented within. The inhabitants of Claudio-polis are sinking (for I cannot call it erecting) a large public bath, upon a low spot of ground which lies at the foot of a mountain. The fund appropriated for the carrying on this work, arises from the money which those honorary members you were pleased to add to their senate, paid (or at least are ready to pay whenever I call upon them) † for their admission. As I am afraid therefore the public money in one place, and (what is infinitely more valuable than any pecuniary consideration) your benefaction in the other, should be ill applied, I am obliged to desire you would send hither an architect to inspect, not only the theatre, but the

the whole space in which the spectators sat. These theatres being open at top, the galleries here mentioned were for the convenience of retiring in bad weather.

* A place in which the athletic exercises were performed, and where the philosophers also used to read their lectures.

† The honorary senators, that is, such as were not received into the council of the city by election, but by the appointment of the emperor, paid a certain sum of money upon their admission into the senate.

bath ;

bath ; in order to consider whether, after all the expense which has already been laid out, it will be better to finish them upon the present plan, or reform the one, and remove the other : for otherwise we may possibly throw away our future cost, by endeavouring not to lose what we have already expended.

Epist. XLIX. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU who are upon the spot, will best be able to consider and determine what is proper to be done concerning the theatre, which the inhabitants of Nicea are building ; as for myself, it will be sufficient if you let me know your resolution. With respect to the particular parts of this theatre which are to be raised at a private charge ; you will see those engagements fulfilled, when the body of the building, to which they are to be annexed, shall be finished. — These paltry Greeks are, I know, immoderately fond of gymnastic diversions, and therefore, perhaps, the citizens of Nicea have enlarged their fabric for this purpose beyond its due proportion ; however, they must be contented with such a one as will be sufficient to answer their occasions.

I entirely leave it to you to persuade the Claudopolitani as you shall think proper, with relation to their bath, which they have placed, it seems, in a very improper situation. As there is no province that is not furnished with men of skill and ingenuity, you cannot possibly want architects ; unless you think it the shortest way to get them from Rome, when it is generally from Greece that they come hither.

Epist.

Epist. L. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

WHEN I reflect upon the splendour of your exalted station, and the greatness of your mind, nothing, I am persuaded, can be more suitable to both, than to point out to you such designs as are worthy of your glorious and immortal name, as being no less useful than magnificent. Bordering upon the territories of the city of Nicomedia is a most extensive lake ; upon which the commodities of the country are easily and cheaply transported to the high road ; but from thence are conveyed in carriages to the sea-side, at great charge and labour. To remedy this inconvenience, it will require, it is true, many hands ; but upon such an occasion they cannot be scarce : for the country, and particularly the city, is exceedingly populous : and one may assuredly hope, that every body will readily engage in a work which will be of universal benefit. It only remains then to send hither, if you shall think proper, a surveyor or an architect, in order to examine whether the lakes lie above the level of the sea ; the engineers of this province being of opinion that the former is higher by forty * cubits. I find there is in the neighbourhood of this place, a large canal, which was cut by one of the kings of this country ; but as it is left unfinished, it is uncertain whether it was for the purpose of draining the adjacent lands, or making a communication between the lake and the river. It is equally doubtful too, whether the death of the king, or the despair of being able to accomplish the design, prevented the completion of it. If this was the reason, I am so much the

* A Roman cubit is equal to 1 foot 5 inches $\frac{406}{1000}$ of our measure. *Arbutnot's tab.*

more desirous, for the sake of your illustrious character, (and I hope you will pardon me the ambition), that you may have the glory of executing what kings * could only attempt.

Epist. LI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THere is something in the scheme you propose of opening a communication between the lake and the sea, which may, perhaps, tempt me to come into it. But you must first carefully examine the situation of this body of water, what quantity it contains, and from whence it is supplied; lest, by letting it into the sea, it should be totally exhausted. You may apply to Calphurnius Macer for an engineer; as I will also send you from hence, some persons skilled in works of this nature.

Epist. LII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

UPon examining the expenses of the city of Byzantium, (which I find are extremely great), I was informed, Sir, that the appoint-

* A commentator upon this passage thinks this a very extraordinary compliment; "As if," says he, "an emperor of Rome could not do more than a little king of Bithynia." But it is much more probable that this critic should be mistaken in his objection, than Pliny in his compliment; and though he will have it to be a little king, it is more reasonable to suppose our author meant some great king of Persia. Besides, *Imperator*, among the Romans, had not of itself any such high idea, as has been affixed to it in later times. The meaning therefore of this wish seems to be, that though Trajan was contented to be in title no more than General [*Imperator*], yet in acts of public munificence he might be more than those who proudly styled themselves kings.

ments

ments of the ambassador which they send yearly to you with their homage, and the act which passes in the senate upon that occasion, amount to twelve thousand sesterces. But knowing the generous maxims of your government, I thought proper to send the decree without the ambassador, that at the same time they discharged their public duty to you, they might be eased in the manner of paying it. This city is likewise taxed with the sum of three thousand sesterces towards defraying the expense of an envoy, whom they annually send to compliment the governor of Moesia: this expense I have also directed to be spared. I beg, Sir, you would do me the honour either to confirm my judgment, or correct my error in these points, by letting me know your sentiments.

Epist. LIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Well approve, my dear Pliny, of your having excused the Byzantines the expense of sending an ambassador to me. I shall esteem their duty as sufficiently paid though I only receive the act of their senate through your hands. The governor of Moesia must likewise excuse them, if they compliment him at a less expense.

Epist. LIV. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Beg, Sir, you would settle a doubt I have concerning your * diplomas; whether you think proper that those whose dates are expired shall

* A diploma is properly a grant of certain privileges either to particular places or persons. It signifies also grants of other kinds; and it sometimes means post-warrants, as, perhaps, it does in this place.

be in force, and how long? For I am apprehensive I may, through ignorance, either confirm such of these instruments as are illegal, or prevent the effect of those which are necessary.

Epist. LV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THE diplomas whose dates are expired, must by no means be made use of. For which reason it is a principal rule with me, to send new instruments of this kind into all the provinces before they are immediately wanted.

Epist. LVI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

UPON intimating, Sir, my design to the city of Apamea, of examining into the state of their public funds and revenues, they told me they were all extremely willing I should inspect their accounts; but that no proconsul had ever yet perused them, as they had a privilege (and that of very ancient date) of administering their commonwealth in the manner they thought proper. I required them to draw up a memorial of what they then offered, which I transmit to you exactly as I received it; though I am sensible it contains several things foreign to the question. I beg you would honour me with your commands, how I am to act in this affair; for I should be extremely sorry either to exceed or fall short of my commission.

Epist. LVII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THE memorial of the Apameans annexed to your letter, has saved me the necessity of considering the reasons they suggest, why the former proconsuls forbore to inspect their accounts; since they are willing to submit them to your examination.

examination. Their compliance deserves to be encouraged; and they may be assured, the inquiry you are to make in pursuance of my orders, shall be with a full reserve to their privileges.

Epist. LVIII. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

THE Nicomedians, Sir, before my arrival in this province, had begun to build a new forum contiguous to their former, in a corner of which stands an ancient temple dedicated to the *mother of the gods*. This fabric must either be repaired, or removed; and for this reason chiefly, because it is a much lower building than that which is now erected. Upon inquiry whether this temple had been consecrated, I was informed that their manner of dedication differs from ours. You will be pleased therefore, Sir, to consider whether a temple, which has not been consecrated in form, may be removed*, consistently with the ceremonies of religion: for if there is no objection from that quarter, there is none on the side of inconvenience.

Epist. LIX. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU may without scruple, my dear Pliny, if the situation requires it, remove the temple of the *mother of the gods*, from the place where it now stands, to any other more convenient. You need be under no difficulty concerning the act of dedication; for the ground of a † foreign city is not capable of receiving that

* Whatever was legally consecrated, was ever afterwards unapplicable to profane uses.

† That is, a city not admitted to enjoy the laws and privileges of Rome.

kind

kind of consecration which is observed by our laws.

Epist. LX. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

WE have celebrated, Sir, with those sentiments of joy your virtues justly merit, the day of your accession, when, at the same time that you accepted, you saved the empire. And we sincerely implored the gods to preserve you in health and prosperity, as it is upon your welfare that the security and repose of mankind depends. I renewed at the same time the oath of allegiance at the head of the army, which repeated it after me in the usual form, the people of the province zealously expressing their affection to you by taking the same oath.

Epist. LXI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOur letter, my dear Pliny, was extremely acceptable, as it gave me an account with what zeal and affection you, together with the army and the provincials, solemnized the day of my accession to the empire.

Epist. LXII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE money owing to the public, is, by the prudence, Sir, of your councils, and the care of my administration, either actually paid in, or now recovering: but I am afraid it must lie unemployed. For, as on one side, there are few or no opportunities of purchasing land, so on the other, one cannot meet with any person who is willing to borrow of the * public, (especially at

* The reason why they did not chuse to borrow of the public at the same rate of interest which they paid

at the interest of 12 *per cent.*), when they can raise money upon the same terms from private hands. You will consider then, Sir, whether it may not be advisable, in order to invite responsible persons to take this money, to lower the interest; or if that scheme should not succeed, to place it in the hands of the *decurii*, upon their giving sufficient security to the public. And though they should not be willing to receive it, yet, as the rate of interest will be abated, the hardship will be so much the less.

Epist. LXIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Agree with you, my dear Pliny, that there seems to be no other method of facilitating the placing out of the public money, than by lowering the interest; the measure of which you will determine according to the number of the borrowers. But to compel persons to receive it, who are not disposed to do so, when possibly they themselves may have no opportunity of employing it, is by no means consistent with the justice of my government.

Epist. LXIV. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Return you my highest acknowledgments, Sir, that, among the many important occupations in which you are engaged, you have condescended to be my guide in those points wherein I have consulted you: a favour which I must now again beseech you to grant me. A certain

paid to private persons, was (as one of the commentators observes), because in the former instance they were obliged to give security; whereas in the latter, they could raise money upon their personal credit.

person

person came before me with a complaint, that his adversaries, who had been banished for three years by the illustrious Servilius Calvus, still remained in the province: they, on the contrary, affirmed that Calvus had restored them again to their country, and produced his edict to that purpose. I thought it necessary therefore to refer the whole affair to you. For as I have your express orders not to restore any person who has been sentenced to banishment either by myself or others; so I have no directions with respect to those, who having been banished by some of my predecessors in this government, have by them also been restored. I am obliged, then, to beg you would inform me, Sir, what method I should observe, as well with regard to these, as to others, who, after having been condemned to perpetual banishment, have returned to the province without permission: for cases of that nature have likewise fallen under my cognisance. A person was brought before me who had been sentenced to perpetual exile by the proconsul Julius Bassus: but knowing that the acts of Bassus, during his administration, had been rescinded, and that the senate had granted leave to all those who had fallen under his condemnation, of bringing their appeal, provided they did so within the space of two years; I inquired of this man whether he had acquainted the proconsul with his case? He replied, he had not. I beg then you would inform me whether you would have him sent back again into exile; or whether you think some more severe, and what kind of punishment, should be inflicted upon him, and such others as may hereafter be found to lie under the same delinquency. I have annexed to my letter the decree of Calvus, and the edict by which the persons mentioned above were restored, as also the decree of Bassus.

Epist. LXV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Will let you know my determination concerning those exiles which were banished for three years by the proconsul P. Servilius Calvus, and soon afterwards restored to the province by his edict, when I shall have informed myself from him of the reasons of this proceeding. With respect to that person who was sentenced to perpetual banishment by Julius Bassus, yet continued to remain in the province, without making his appeal if he thought himself aggrieved, (though he had two years given him for that purpose), I would have him sent in chains to my * prætorian præfects: for only to remand him back to a punishment which he has contumaciously eluded, will by no means be sufficient.

Epist. LXVI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

When I cited the judges, Sir, to attend me at a † sessions which I was going to hold, Flavius Archippus claimed the privilege of being excused, as exercising the profession of a ‡ philo-

* These, in the original institution as settled by Augustus, were only commanders of his body-guards, but in the later times of the Roman empire they were next in authority under the Emperor, to whom they seem to have acted as a sort of prime ministers.

† The provinces were divided into a kind of circuits called *conventus*, whither the proconsuls used to go in order to administer justice. The judges here mentioned must not be understood to mean the same sort of judicial officers as with us; they were rather in the nature of our juries.

‡ By the imperial constitutions the philosophers were exempted from all public functions. *Catanæus.*
sopher.

sopher. It was alleged by some who were present, that he ought not only to be excused from that office, but even struck out of the roll of judges, and remanded back to the punishment from which he had escaped by breaking his chains. At the same time a sentence of the proconsul Velius Paullus was read, by which it appeared that Archippus had been condemned to the mines for forgery. He had nothing to produce in proof that this sentence had ever been reversed. He alleged, however, in favour of his restitution, a petition which he presented to Domitian, together with a letter from that prince and a decree of the Prusensians in his honour. To these he subjoined a letter which he had received from you; as also an edict and a letter of your august father confirming the grants which had been made to him by Domitian. For these reasons, notwithstanding crimes of so atrocious a nature were laid to his charge, I did not think proper to determine any thing concerning him, without first consulting with you in the affair, which seems to merit your peculiar decision. I have transmitted to you, with this letter, the several allegations on both sides.

DOMITIAN'S Epist. to TERENCEIUS MAXIMUS.

“**F**LAVIUS Archippus the philosopher has prevailed with me to give an order that 600,000 sesterces be laid out in the purchase of an estate for the support of him and his family, in the neighbourhood of Prusias, his native country. Let this be accordingly done: and place that sum to the article of my benefactions.”

From the same, to L. APPIUS MAXIMUS.

“ I Recommend, my dear Maximus, to your
 “ protection, that worthy philosopher Ar-
 “ chippus; a person whose morals are agreeable
 “ to his profession: and I would have you pay
 “ full regard to whatever he shall reasonably re-
 “ quest.”

The EDICT of the Emperor NERVA.

“ T Here are some points, no doubt, Quirites,
 “ concerning which the happy tenor of
 “ my government is a sufficient explanation of
 “ my sentiments; and a good prince need not
 “ give an express declaration in matters where-
 “ in his intention cannot but be clearly under-
 “ stood. Every citizen in the empire will bear
 “ me witness, that I gave up my private repose
 “ to the security of the public, in order to have
 “ the pleasure of dispensing new bounties of my
 “ own, and confirming former ones of my pre-
 “ decessors. But lest the memory of him * who
 “ made these grants, or the diffidence of those
 “ who received them, should occasion any in-
 “ terruption to the public joy, I thought it as
 “ necessary as it is agreeable to me to obviate
 “ these suspicions, by assuring them of my in-
 “ dulgence. Let it not be thought that I shall
 “ rescind either the public or private acts of any
 “ former prince, for the sake of meriting the ob-
 “ ligation of ratifying and confirming them; nor
 “ need any who have received the smiles of im-
 “ perial favour, renew their petitions to me in
 “ order to enjoy the benefit of them. Rather let
 “ them leave me in full leisure for conferring new

* Domitian,

“ favours;

“ favours ; under the assurance, that I am only
 “ to be solicited for those which have not already
 “ been obtained.”

From the same, to TULLIUS JUSTUS.

“ **A**S I have made it the maxim of my govern-
 “ ment to observe the ordinances of my
 “ predecessors in all things, so regard must be
 “ paid to the letters of Domitian.”

Epist. LXVII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

FLavius Archippus has conjured me by all my wishes for your prosperity, and by your immortal glory, that I would transmit to you the memorial which he presented to me. I could not refuse a request conceived in such terms ; however, I acquainted the prosecutrix with this my intention, from whom I have also received a memorial on her part. I have annexed them both to my letter ; that, by hearing as it were each side, you may more easily consider what to determine in this affair.

Epist. LXVIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IT is possible Domitian might be ignorant of the circumstances in which Archippus was, when he wrote the letter so much to that philosopher's honour. However, it is more agreeable to my disposition to suppose that prince designed he should be restored to his former situation ; especially since he so often had the honour of a statue decreed to him by those who could not be * ignorant of the sentence which the procon-

* In the text of all the editions it is *qui ignorabant* ; but the reasoning seems to require the negative particle ; though the commentators have passed over the passage without objection.

ful Paullus pronounced upon him. But I do not mean to intimate by this, my dear Pliny, that if any new charge should be brought against him, you should be less disposed to hear his accusers, I have examined the memorial of his prosecutrix, Furia Prima, as also that of Archippus himself which you sent with your former letter.

Epist. LXIX. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

IT is with great judgment, Sir, you are apprehensive *, that the lake will be in danger of being entirely drained, if a communication is opened between that and the sea, by means of the river: but I think I have found a method to obviate that inconvenience. A channel may be cut from the lake to the river, and a narrow slip of land left between them. By this means the water in the lake will not only be preserved and kept distinct from the river, but all the same purposes will be answered as if they were united: for it will be extremely easy to convey over that little intervening ridge whatever burthens shall be brought down by the canal. This is a scheme which may be pursued, if it should be found necessary; but I hope there will be no occasion to put it in practice. For in the first place, the lake itself is pretty deep; and in the next, by damming up a river, which runs from it on the opposite side, and turning its course as we shall find proper, the same quantity of water may still be retained. Besides, there are several little brooks near the place where it is proposed the channel shall be cut, which, if skilfully collected, will supply the lake with water in proportion to what it shall lose. But if you should rather approve of the channel's being extended farther, and cut narrower, and so conveyed directly into

* See letters 50. and 51. of this book.

the sea, without running into the river, the reflux of the tide will return whatever it receives from the lake. After all, if the nature of the place should not admit of any of these schemes, the course of the water may be checked by sluices. These, however, and many other particulars, will be more skilfully examined into by the engineer, which, agreeably to your promise, I hope you will send; for indeed, Sir, it is an enterprise well worthy of your attention and magnificence. In the mean while I have wrote to the illustrious Calpurnius Macer, in pursuance of your orders, to send me a proper engineer for this occasion.

Epist. LXX. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IT is evident, my dear Pliny, that neither your prudence nor your care have been wanting in this affair of the lake, since, in order to make it of more general benefit to us, you have provided so many expedients against the hazard of its being drained. I leave it to your own choice to pursue which ever scheme shall be thought most proper. Calpurnius Macer will furnish you, no doubt, with an engineer, and artists of that kind are not wanting in his province.

Epist. LXXI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

A Very considerable question, Sir, in which the whole province is interested, has been lately started, concerning the * state and maintenance of deserted children. I have examined the constitutions of former princes upon this head, but not finding any thing in them relating, either in general or particular, to the Bithynians,

* That is, whether they should be considered in a state of freedom or slavery.

I thought it necessary to apply to you for your directions : for in a point which seems to require the special interposition of your authority, I could not content myself with following precedents. An edict of the emperor Augustus (as pretended) was read to me, concerning one Annia ; as also a letter from Vespasian to the Lacedæmonians, and another from Titus to the same, with one likewise from him to the Achæans. At the same time some letters from Domitian were exhibited to me, directed to the proconsuls Avidius Nigrinus, and Armenius Brocchus, together with one from that prince to the Lacedæmonians : but I have not transmitted them to you, as well because they were not correct (and some of them too of suspicious authority), as because I imagine the true copies are preserved in your archives.

Epist. LXXII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THE question concerning such children as were exposed by their parents, and afterwards taken up by others, and educated in a state of servitude though born free, has been frequently discussed ; but I do not find in the constitutions of the princes my predecessors, any general regulation upon this head, extending to all the provinces. There are, indeed, some rescripts of Domitian to Avidius Nigrinus and Armenius Brocchus, which ought to be observed ; but Bithynia is not comprehended in the provinces therein mentioned. I am of opinion therefore, that the claims of those who assert their right of freedom upon this footing, should be allowed without obliging them to purchase their liberty by paying for their maintenance.

Epist.

Epist. LXXIII. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

HAVING been petitioned by some persons to grant them the liberty (agreeably to the practice of former proconsuls) of removing the relics of their deceased relations, upon the suggestion, that either their monuments were decayed by age, or ruined by the inundations of the river, or for other reasons of the same kind ; I thought proper, Sir, knowing that, in cases of this nature, it is usual at Rome to apply to the college of priests, to consult with you who are the sovereign of that sacred order, what you would have me observe in this affair.

Epist. LXXIV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IT will be a hardship upon the provincials, to oblige them to address themselves to the college of priests, whenever they may have just reasons for removing the ashes of their ancestors. In this case, therefore, it will be better you should follow the example of the governors your predecessors, and grant or deny them this liberty as you shall see reasonable.

Epist. LXXV. PLINY to the Emperor TRA-
JAN.

I Have inquired, Sir, at Prusa, for a proper place on which to erect the bath you were pleased to allow that city to build ; and I have found one to my satisfaction. It is upon the site where formerly, I am told, stood a very beautiful fabric, but which is now entirely fallen into ruins. By fixing upon that spot, we shall gain the advantage of ornamenting the city in a part
which

which at present is exceedingly deformed, and enlarging it at the same time without removing any of the edifices; only rebuilding one which is fallen to decay. There are some circumstances attending this structure, of which it is proper I should inform you. Claudius Polyænus bequeathed it to the emperor Claudius Cæsar, with directions that a temple should be erected to that prince in the midst of a piazza, and that the remainder of the house should be let in apartments. The city received the rents for a considerable time; but partly by its having been plundered, and partly by its being neglected, the piazza, together with the whole dome, is entirely gone out of repair, and there is now scarce any thing remaining of it, but the ground upon which it stood. If you shall think proper, Sir, either to give or sell this spot of ground to the city, as it lies so conveniently for their purpose, they will receive it as the highest mark of your favour. I intend, with your permission, to place the bath in the vacant area; and to extend a range of porticoes with seats, in that part where the former edifice stood. This new fabric I design to dedicate to you, by whose bounty it will rise with all the elegance and magnificence worthy of your glorious name. I have sent you a copy of the will, by which, though it is not very correct, you will see, that Polyænus left several things for the ornament of this house; but those also are lost with all the rest: I will however make the strictest inquiry after them that I am able.

Epist. LXXVI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Have no objection to the Prusenses making use of the area together with the vacant house, which you say is fallen into ruins, for the situation of their bath. But it is not sufficiently clear

clear by your letter, whether the temple in the centre of the piazza was actually dedicated to Claudius, or not; for if it were, it is still consecrated ground *.

Epist. LXXVII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Have been pressed by some, to take upon myself the cognisance of causes relating to claims of freedom by birthright, according to a rescript of Domitian's to Minucius Rufus, and the practice of former proconsuls. But upon casting my eye on the decree of the senate concerning cases of this nature, I find it only mentions † the proconsular provinces. I therefore, Sir, defer intermeddling in this affair, till I shall receive your commands how you would have me act.

* And consequently, by the Roman laws, unapplicable to any other purpose.

† The Roman provinces, in the times of the emperors, were of two sorts; those which were distinguished by the name of the *Provinciæ Cæsaris*, and the *Provinciæ Senatus*. The *Provinciæ Cæsaris*, or imperial provinces, were such as the emperor, for reasons of policy, reserved to his own immediate administration, or of those whom he thought proper to appoint: the *Provinciæ Senatus*, or proconsular provinces, were such as he left to the government of proconsuls or prætors chosen in the ordinary method of election [Vid. Suet. in Aug. c. 44. n. 1.]. Of the former kind was Bithynia, at the time when our author presided there. Vid. Masson. vit. Plin p. 133.

Epist. LXXVIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IF you will send me the decree of the senate, which occasioned your doubt, I shall be able to judge, whether you ought to take upon yourself the cognisance of causes relating to claims of freedom by birthright.

Epist. LXXIX. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

JULIUS Largus, of the province of Pontica, (whom I never saw, nor indeed even heard of till lately), in confidence, Sir, of your distinguishing judgment in my favour, has intrusted me with the execution of the last instance of his loyalty towards you. He has left me, by will, his estate upon trust, in the first place to receive out of it 50,000 sesterces for my own use, and to apply the remainder for the benefit of the cities of Heraclea and Tiani, either for the erecting some public edifice in honour of your memory, or instituting athletic games, as I shall see proper. These games are to be celebrated every five years, and called *Trajan's games*. Of this I thought it necessary to acquaint you; and for this reason chiefly, that I may have your sentiments how I ought to determine.

Epist. LXXX. TRAJAN to PLINY.

BY the prudent choice Julius Largus has made of a trustee, one would imagine he had known you well. You will consider then what will most tend to the perpetuating of his memory, according to the circumstances of the
respective

respective places ; and pursue whatever you shall think most proper.

*Epist. LXXXI. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.*

YOU acted agreeably, Sir, to your usual prudence, when you commanded the illustrious Calpurnius Macer to send a legionary centurion to Byzantium. You will consider whether the city of Juliopolis does not deserve the same regard, which, though it is extremely small, sustains very great burthens, and is so much the more exposed to injuries, as it is less capable of resisting them. Whatever benefits you shall confer upon that city, will in effect be advantageous to the whole country : for it is situated at the entrance of Bithynia, and is the town through which all who travel into that province generally pass.

Epist. LXXXII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THE circumstances of the city of Byzantium are such, by the great confluence of strangers to it, that I thought myself obliged to honour it with a legionary centurion's guard, which was always granted to them in former reigns. But if we should distinguish the city of Juliopolis in the same manner, it will be introducing a precedent for many others, whose claim to that favour will rise in proportion to their want of strength. I have so much confidence, however, in your administration, as to believe you will omit no method of protecting them from injuries. If any shall act contrary to the discipline I have enjoined, let them be instantly corrected ; or should their crimes be too enormous for immediate chastisement, if they happen to be sol-

ciers, I would have them sent to their officers, with an account of the particular misdemeanor you shall find they have been guilty of ; but if they are persons who are returning to Rome, inform me by letter.

Epist. LXXXIII. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

BY a law of * Pompey's concerning the Bithynians it is enacted, Sir, that no person shall exercise any magistracy, or be chosen into the senate under the age of thirty. By the same law it is declared, that those who have passed through the offices of the commonwealth, shall be senators of course. Subsequent to this law the Emperor Augustus published an edict, by which it was ordained, that persons of the age of twenty-two should be capable of being magistrates. The question therefore is, whether those who have exercised the functions of a magistrate before the age of thirty, may be legally chosen into the senate by the † censors ? And if so, whether, by the same kind of construction, they may be elected senators, at the age when they are allowed to be magistrates, though

* Pompey the Great having subdued Mithridates, and by that means greatly enlarged the Roman empire, passed several laws relating to the newly-conquered provinces, and, among others, that which is here mentioned ; as Catanzæus observes from Appian

† The right of electing senators did not originally belong to the censors, who were only, as Tully somewhere calls them, *guardians of the discipline and manners of the city* ; but in process of time they ingrossed the whole privilege of conferring that honour.

they

they have not actually borne any office? A custom, it seems, which has hitherto been observed; and is said to be necessary, as it is rather better that persons of noble birth should be admitted into the senate, than those of plebeian rank. The censors elect having desired my sentiments upon this point, I was of opinion, that, both by the law of Pompey and the edict of Augustus, those who had exercised the magistrature before the age of thirty, might be chosen into the senate; and for this reason, because the edict allows the office of magistrate to be undertaken before thirty; and the law declares, that whoever has been a magistrate, has a right to be a senator. But with respect to those who never discharged any office in the state, though they were of the age required for that purpose, I had some doubt: and therefore, Sir, I apply to you for your directions. I have annexed to this letter the heads of the law, together with the edict of Augustus.

Epist. LXXXIV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Agree with you, my dear Pliny, in your conclusion; and am of opinion that the law of Pompey is so far repealed by the edict of the Emperor Augustus, that those persons who are not less than twenty-two years of age may execute the office of magistrates, and when they have, may be received into the senate of their respective cities. But I think those who are under thirty years of age, and have not discharged the function of a magistrate, cannot, upon pretence that in point of years they might have done so, claim a place in the senate of their several communities.

Epist. LXXXV. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

WHilst I was dispatching some public affairs, Sir, at Prusa, with an intention of leaving that city the same day, the magistrate Asclepiades informed me, that Eumolpus had appealed to me from a motion which Cocceianus Dion made in their senate. Dion, it seems, having been appointed supervisor of a public edifice, desired that it might be assigned * to the city in form. Eumolpus, who was counsel for Flavius Archippus, insisted that Dion should first be required to deliver in his accounts relating to this work, before it was assigned to the corporation; suggesting he had not performed his duty in the manner he ought. He took notice at the same time, that this building, in which your statue is erected, was made use of also for the burial † of the dead, the bodies of Dion's wife and son being (as he asserted) there deposited; and petitioned that I would hear this cause in the public tribunal. Upon my complying with his request, and deferring my jour-

* This, probably, was some act whereby the city was to ratify and confirm the proceedings of Dion under the commission assigned to him.

† It was a notion which generally prevailed with the ancients, in the Jewish as well as Heathen world, that there was a pollution in the contact of dead bodies, and this they extended to the very house in which the corpse lay, and even to the uncovered vessels that stood in the same room. [*Vid. Pot. antiq.* v. 2. 188.]. From some such opinion as this it is probable, that the circumstance here mentioned of placing Trajan's statue where these bodies were deposited, was esteemed as a mark of disrespect to his person.

ney for that purpose, he desired a longer day in order to prepare the cause, and that I would try it in some other city. I appointed the city of Nicea, where, when I took my seat, Eumolpus, pretending not to be yet sufficiently instructed, moved that the trial might be again put off: Dion, on the contrary, insisted it should be heard. They debated this point very fully on both side, and entered a little into the merits of the cause; when being of opinion, that it was reasonable it should be adjourned, and thinking it proper to advise with you in an affair which was of consequence in point of example, I directed them to give in the articles of their respective allegations in writing; for I was desirous you should judge from their own words of what was offered on each part. This Dion promised to do, as Eumolpus also assured me he would draw up in writing what he had to allege on the part of the community. But he added, that being only concerned as advocate on behalf of Archippus, whose instructions he had laid before me, he had nothing to charge with respect to the sepulchres. Archippus however, for whom Eumolpus was counsel here, as at Prusa, undertook to present an accusation upon this head in writing. But neither Eumolpus nor Archippus (though I have waited several days for that purpose) have yet performed their engagement: Dion indeed has; and I have annexed his memorial to this letter. I have taken a view myself of the buildings, where I find your statue is placed in a library; and as to the edifice which is supposed to contain the bodies of Dion's wife and son, it stands in the middle of an area, which is surrounded with a colonade. I particularly therefore intreat you, Sir, to direct my judgment in the determination of this cause above all others, as it is a point to which the world is greatly attentive.

And,

And, indeed, it highly deserves a very mature deliberation, since the fact is not only acknowledged, but countenanced by many examples.

Epist. LXXXVI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

AS you well know, my dear Pliny, it is the fixed maxim of my government not to create an awe of my person by severe and rigorous measures, and by construing every slight offence into an act of treason, there was no occasion for you to hesitate a moment upon the point, concerning which you thought proper to consult me. Without entering therefore into that question, (to which I would by no means give any attention, though there were ever so many instances of the same kind), I recommend to your care the examination of Dion's accounts relating to the public works which he has finished; as it is a case in which the interest of the city is concerned, and as Dion neither ought, nor indeed does refuse, to submit to the inquiry.

Epist. LXXXVII. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

THE Niceans having conjured me, Sir, by (what is, and ought to be, most sacred to me) your prosperity and immortal glory, to present to you their petition; I did not think myself at liberty to refuse them: I have therefore inclosed it in this letter.

Epist. LXXXVIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THE Niceans, I find, claim a right, by an edict of Augustus, to the estate of every citizen who dies intestate. You will therefore summon the several parties interested in this question,

question, and with the assistance of Epimachus and Gemellinus, my procurators, (having duly weighed every argument that shall be alleged against the claim), determine as shall appear most reasonable.

*Epist. LXXXIX. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.*

MAY this and many succeeding birthdays be attended, Sir, with the highest felicity to you; and may you, in the midst of an uninterrupted course of health and prosperity, be still adding to the increase of that immortal glory, which your virtues justly merit!

Epist. XC. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOUR wishes, my dear Pliny, for my enjoyment of many happy birthdays amidst the glory and prosperity of the republic, were extremely agreeable to me.

Epist. XCI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE city of Sinope is ill supplied, Sir, with water, which however may be brought thither from about sixteen miles distance in great plenty and perfection. The ground, indeed, near the source of this spring, is, for something more than a mile, of a very soft and marshy nature; but I have directed an examination to be made, (which will be done at a small expense), whether it is capable of bearing any superstructure. I have taken care to provide a sufficient fund for this purpose, if you shall approve, Sir, of a work so conducive to the health and pleasure of this colony, greatly distressed by a scarcity of water.

Epist.

Epist. XCII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Would have you proceed, my dear Pliny, in carefully examining, whether the ground you suspect, is firm enough to support an aquæduct. For I have no manner of doubt that it is proper the city of Sinope should be supplied with water; provided their finances will bear the expense of a work so conducive to their health and pleasure.

Epist. XCIII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE free and confederate city of Amisus enjoys, by your indulgence, the privilege of its own laws. A memorial being presented to me there, concerning a charitable * society, I have inclosed it in this letter, that you may consider, Sir, whether, and how far, these meetings are to be permitted, or prohibited.

Epist. XCIV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IF a charitable society be agreeable to the laws of the Amisenians, which by the articles of alliance it is stipulated they shall enjoy, I shall not oppose it; especially if these contributions

* The learned Casaubon, in his observations upon Theophrastus, (as cited by one of the commentators), informs us, that there were, at Athens and other cities of Greece, certain fraternities, which paid into a common chest a monthly contribution towards the support of such of their members as had fallen into misfortunes; upon condition, that if ever they arrived to more prosperous circumstances, they should repay into the general fund the money so advanced.

are

are employed, not for the purposes of riot and faction, but for the support of the indigent. In other cities, however, which are subject to our laws, I would have all assemblies of this nature prohibited.

Epist. XCV. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

SUETONIUS Tranquillus, Sir, is a person of great merit and learning, as well as of noble birth. I was so much pleased with his turn and manners, that I long since received him into my family; and my affection for him still increased the more I discovered of his character. Two reasons concur to make the privilege * which the law grants to those who have three children, extremely necessary to him; the bounty of his friends, and ill success of his marriage. Those advantages therefore which nature has denied to

* By the law for encouragement of matrimony, as a penalty upon those who lived bachelors, they were declared incapable of inheriting any legacy by will; so likewise if being married, they had no children, they could not claim the full advantage of benefactions of that kind. Thus Nævolus in Juvenal very humorously urges his gallantries in his friend's family, as a meritorious piece of service which he had done him.

*And ow'st thou nothing then, ingrate! to me,
That from my loins you sons and daughters see?
A parent's privilege by me you gain,
And the rich legacy in full obtain. Sat. 9. ver. 82.*

Pliny therefore alludes to this law, when he mentions the bounties of Tranquillus's deceased friends, as one reason why it was expedient for him to obtain the *jus trium liberorum*, viz. in order to entitle him to the full benefit of their several bequests.

him,

him, he hopes to obtain from your goodness, by means of my intercession. I am thoroughly sensible, Sir, of the value of the favour I am asking; but I know I am making this request to one, whose gracious compliance with all my desires I have amply experienced. How passionately I wish to obtain this favour, you will judge by my thus requesting it in my absence, which I should not have done, had it been a point wherein I am only commonly solicitous.

Epist. XCVI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU cannot but know, my dear Pliny, how reserved I am in granting favours of this kind, having frequently declared in the senate, that I had not exceeded the number which I assured that illustrious order I would be contented with. I have yielded, however, to your request; and have directed an article to be inserted in my register, that I have conferred upon Tranquillus, on my usual conditions, the privilege which the law grants to those who have three children.

*Epist. * XCVII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.*

IT is a rule, Sir, which I inviolably observe, to refer myself to you in all my doubts; for who is more capable of removing my scruples, or

* This letter is esteemed as almost the only genuine monument of ecclesiastical antiquity relating to the times immediately succeeding the apostles, it being wrote at most not above forty years after the death of Paul. It was preserved by the Christians themselves as a clear and unsuspecting evidence of the purity of their doctrines; and is frequently appealed to by the early writers of the church against the calumnies of their adversaries.

informing

informing my ignorance? Having never been present at any trials concerning those who profess Christianity, I am unacquainted not only with the nature of their crimes, or the measure of their punishment, but how far it is proper to enter into an examination concerning them. Whether therefore any difference is usually made with respect to the ages of the guilty, or no distinction is to be observed between the young and the adult; whether repentance entitles them to a pardon; or if a man has been once a Christian, it avails nothing to desist from his error; whether the very profession of Christianity, unattended with any criminal act, or only the crimes themselves inherent in the profession are punishable; in all these points I am greatly doubtful. In the mean while, the method I have observed towards those who have been brought before me as Christians, is this: I interrogated them whether they were Christians; if they confessed, I repeated the question twice again, adding threats at the same time; when, if they still persevered, I ordered them to be immediately punished: for I was persuaded, whatever the nature of their opinions might be, a contumacious and inflexible obstinacy certainly deserved correction. There were others also brought before me possessed with the same infatuation, but being * citizens of Rome, I directed them to be carried thither. But this crime spreading (as is usually the case) while it was actually under prosecution, several instances of the same nature occurred. An information

* It was one of the privileges of a Roman citizen, secured by the Sempronian law, that he could not be capitally convicted but by the suffrage of the people, which seems to have been still so far in force, as to make it necessary to send the persons here mentioned to Rome.

was presented to me without any name subscribed, containing a charge against several persons, who, upon examination, denied they were Christians, or had ever been so. They repeated after me an invocation to the gods, and offered religious rites with wine and frankincense before your statue, (which for the purpose I had ordered to be brought together with those of the gods), and even reviled the name of Christ; whereas there is no forcing, it is said, those who are really Christians, into a compliance with any of these articles: I thought proper therefore to discharge them. Some among those who were accused by a witness in person, at first confessed themselves Christians, but immediately after denied it; while the rest owned indeed that they had been of that number formerly, but had now (some above three, others more, and a few above twenty years ago) forsaken that error. They all worshipped your statue and the images of the gods, throwing out imprecations at the same time against the name of Christ. They affirmed, the whole of their guilt, or their error, was, that they met on a certain stated day before it was light, and addressed themselves in a form of prayer to Christ, as to some God, binding themselves by a solemn oath, not for the purposes of any wicked design, but never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which, it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble, to eat in common a harmless meal. From this custom, however, they desisted after the publication of my edict, by which, according to your orders, I forbade the meeting of any assemblies. After receiving this account, I judged it so much the more necessary to endeavour to extort the real truth, by putting two female slaves
to

to the torture, who were said to administer * in their religious functions: but I could discover nothing more than an absurd and excessive superstition. I thought proper therefore to adjourn all farther proceedings in this affair, in order to consult with you. For it appears to be a matter highly deserving your consideration; more especially as great numbers must be involved in the danger of these prosecutions, this inquiry having already extended, and being still likely to extend to persons of all ranks and ages, and even of both sexes. For this contagious superstition is not confined to the cities only, but has spread its infection among the country-villages. Nevertheless, it still seems impossible to remedy this evil and restrain its progress. The temples, at least, which were once almost deserted, begin now to be frequented; and the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are again revived; while there is a general demand for the victims, which for some time past have met with but few purchasers. From hence it is easy to imagine, what numbers might be reclaimed from this error, if a pardon were granted to those who shall repent.

Epist. XCVIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THE method you have pursued, my dear Pliny, in the proceedings against those Christians which were brought before you, is extremely proper; as it is not possible to lay down

* These women, it is supposed, exercised the same office as Phœbe mentioned by Paul, whom he styles deaconness of the church of Cenchrea. Their business was to tend the poor and sick, and other charitable offices; as also to assist at the ceremony of female baptism, for the more decent performance of that rite: as Vossius observes upon this passage.

any fixed plan by which to act in all cases of this nature. But I would not have you officiously enter into any inquiries concerning them. If indeed they should be brought before you, and the crime is proved, they must be punished * ; with
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* If we impartially examine this prosecution of the Christians, we shall find it to have been grounded on the ancient constitution of the state, and not to have proceeded from a cruel or arbitrary temper in Trajan. The Roman legislature appears to have been early jealous of any innovation in point of public worship; and we find the magistrates, during the old republic, frequently interposing in cases of that nature. Valerius Maximus has collected some instances to that purpose, [L. 1. c. 3.]; and Livy mentions it as an established principle of the earlier ages of the commonwealth, to guard against the introduction of foreign ceremonies of religion. *Quoties* (says that excellent historian, speaking in the person of one of the consuls who is addressing himself to the people) *quoties hoc patrum avorumque aetate negotium est magistratibus datum, ut sacra externa fieri vetarent?* *Judicabant enim prudentissimi viri—nihil æque dissolvendæ religionis esse, quam ubi non patrio, sed externo ritu sacrificaretur.* [L. 39. c. 16.]. It was an old and fixed maxim likewise of the Roman government, not to suffer any unlicensed assemblies of the people; and of this Livy also is a voucher: *Majores vestri* (says he) *ne vos quidem nisi quum, &c. forte temere coire noluerunt; et ubicunque multitudo esset, ibi et legitimum rectorem multitudinis censebant debere esse.* [L. 36. c. 25.]. From hence it seems evident, that the Christians had rendered themselves obnoxious (not so much to Trajan, as) to the ancient and settled laws of the state, by introducing a foreign worship, and assembling themselves without authority.

We are not therefore to judge of the proceedings in question, by the rules we should apply to cases of the same nature in our own times. The established religion of the Romans was no other, in the judgment
and

the reſtriction however, that where the party denies himſelf to be a Chriſtian, and ſhall make it

and confeſſion of their beſt writers, than an engine of ſtate, which could not be ſhaken without the utmoſt danger, or rather, perhaps, without the total ſubverſion of their civil government. Accordingly we find them ſtrongly inculcating a tenacious obſervance of all its rites: *Majorum inſtituta tueri* (ſays Cicero) *ſacris cæremoniisſque retinendis, ſapientis eſt.* [De Leg.]. Nor is this principle, if the obſervation of the celebrated Machiavel is juſt, peculiar to the Roman ſtate, but of univerſal truth in politics; for he lays it down as a general maxim, 'That "where-
" ever the religion of any ſtate falls into diſregard
" and contempt, it is impoſſible for that ſtate to ſub-
" ſiſt long." [*Mach. diſcorſi ſopra Tit. Liv.*]. This caſe therefore is to be conſidered in a civil, not a religious view; as a matter of ſtate, not of ſpeculation; wherein the lenity and moderation both of the Emperor and his miniſter deſerve to be applauded, as they are neither of them for puſhing the matter as far as they moſt certainly might, had they acted ſtrictly up to the *ancient* and *fundamental* laws of their country.

The circumſtance that attended the Chriſtian aſſemblies being held at an unuſual hour (*ante lucem*, as Pliny ſays), ſeems to have raiſed a ſuſpice that they were of the Bacchanalian kind. For it is extremely obſervable, that in the account which the Chriſtians here give of the true deſign of their meeting, they juſtify themſelves from the very crimes with which the Bacchanalians had been charged; intimating, it ſhould ſeem, that they themſelves had been taxed with the ſame: *ſe ſacramento non ad ſcelus aliquod obſtringere; ſed ne furta. ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, &c.* which runs exactly parallel with the accuſation againſt the Bacchanalians, as it ſtands in Livy: *Nec unum genus noxæ, ſupra promiſcua, &c. ſed falſi teſtes, falſa ſigna teſtimoniaque et indicia ex eadem officina exitant.* [Liv. l. 39. c. 8.]

evident that he is not, by invoking our gods, let him (notwithstanding any former suspicion) be pardoned upon his repentance. Informations without the accuser's name subscribed, ought not to be received in prosecutions of any sort, as it is introducing a very dangerous precedent, and by no means agreeable to the equity of my government.

Epist. XCIX. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE elegant and beautiful city of Amastris, Sir, has, among other capital buildings, a most noble and extensive piazza. On one entire side of this structure runs, what is called indeed a river, but in fact is no other than a vile common sho'e, extremely offensive to the eye, and at the same time very unwholesome by its noxious smell. It will be advantageous therefore, in point of health, as well as ornament, to have it covered; which shall be done, with your permission: as I will take care on my part, that money be not wanting for executing so noble and necessary a work.

Epist. C. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IT is highly reasonable, my dear Pliny, if the water which runs through the city of Amastris is prejudicial to the health of the inhabitants, that it should be covered. I am well assured, you will, with your usual application, take care that the money necessary for this work shall not be wanting.

Epist. CI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

WE have paid, Sir, with great joy and alacrity, the vows which we offered up for you

you the last year; and have again publicly renewed them, assisted by the army and provincials. We implored the gods to preserve you and the republic in safety and prosperity, with that peculiar mark of their bounty, which not only your other many and great virtues, but particularly your distinguished piety and reverence of them deserves.

Epist. CII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IT was very agreeable to me to learn by your letter, that the army and the provincials seconded you with great joy and unanimity, in those vows which you paid and renewed to the immortal gods, for my welfare.

Epist. CIII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

WE have celebrated, with all the zeal we ought, the day in which, by a very happy succession, the protection of mankind was transferred to you; recommending to the gods, from whom you received the empire, the object of our public vows and congratulations.

Epist. CIV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Was extremely well pleased to be informed by your letter, that you had, at the head of the soldiers and the provincials, solemnized my accession to the empire, with all due joy and zeal.

Epist. CV. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

Valerius Paulinus, Sir, having left me his right * of patronage over all his freedmen, except one, I entreat you to grant the freedom of Rome to three of them. To desire you to extend this favour to more, would, I fear, be too unreasonable a trespass upon your indulgence; which, as I have amply experienced, I ought to be so much the more cautious in troubling. The persons for whom I make this request are, C. Valerius Æticius, C. Valerius Dionysius, and C. Valerius Aper.

Epist. CVI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

AS it is very generous of you to consult the interest of those whom Valerius Paulinus has confided to your trust, I cannot but encourage your good intentions. I have therefore given the freedom of the city to those persons for whom you requested it, and have directed the grant to be registered. I am ready to do the same for the rest, whenever you shall desire me.

* By the Papian law, which passed in the consulship of M. Papius Mutilus and Q. Poppeas Secundus, U. C. 761, if a freedman died worth 100,000 sesterces, (or about 800 l. of our money), leaving only one child, his patron (that is, the master from whom he received his liberty) was entitled to half his estate; if he left two children, to one third; but if more than two, then the patron was absolutely excluded. This was afterwards altered by Justinian. *Inst.* l. 3. tit. 8.

Epist.

Epist. CVII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

P Accius Aquila, captain of the sixth equestrian cohort, requested me, Sir, to transmit his petition to you, in favour of his daughter. I thought it would be unkind to refuse him this good office, knowing, as I do, with what patience and humanity you receive the petitions of the soldiers.

Epist. CVIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Have read the petition of P. Accius Aquila, captain of the sixth equestrian cohort, which you sent to me; and, in compliance with his request, I have given his daughter the freedom of the city of Rome. I send you at the same time the patent, which you will deliver to him.

Epist. CIX. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Beg, Sir, your directions with respect to the recovering those debts which are due to the cities of Bithynia and Pontus, either for rent, or goods sold, or upon any other consideration. I find they have a privilege granted to them by several proconsuls, of being preferred to other creditors; and this custom has prevailed, as if it had been established by law. Your prudence, I imagine, will think it necessary to enact some settled rule, by which their rights may always be secured. For the ordinances of others, however wisely founded, are but feeble and temporary expedients, unless confirmed by your authority.

Epist. CX. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THE rule by which the cities either of Pontus or Bithynia are to be governed, in the recovery of debts of whatever kind, due to their several communities, must be determined agreeably to their respective laws. Where any of them enjoy the privilege of being preferred to other creditors, it must be observed; but where no such privilege prevails, it is not just I should establish one, in prejudice of private property.

Epist. CXI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE solicitor to the treasury of the city of Amisus laid a claim, Sir, before me against Julius Piso of about 40,000 denarii, which were given him by the public above twenty years ago, with the consent of the general council and assembly of the city: and he founded his demand upon certain of your edicts, by which donations of this kind are prohibited. Piso, on the other hand, asserted that he had conferred large sums of money upon the community, and indeed had expended that way almost his whole estate. He insisted upon the length of time which had intervened since this donation, and hoped that he should not be compelled, to the ruin of the remainder * of his fortunes, to refund a sum, which had

* The translator has ventured to give this sense to *reliquæ dignitatis*. It is, he confesses, a very uncommon, perhaps the single instance of the word *dignitas* being used in that meaning; still, however the context, together with the epithet which is joined with it, will, he imagines, clearly justify him. There is nothing in the nature of this case to make it reasonable to suppose.

had ben granted him long since, in return for many good offices he had done to the city. For this reason, Sir, I thought it necessary to suspend giving any judgment in this cause, till I shall receive your directions.

Epist. CXII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THough by my edicts I have ordained, that no largesses shall be given out of the public money ; yet, that numberless private persons may not be disturbed in the secure possession of their fortunes, those donations which have been made long since, ought not to be called in question or revoked. We will not therefore inquire into any thing that has been transacted in this affair so long ago as twenty years ; for I would be no less attentive to secure the repose of every private man, than the treasure of every public community.

pose, that the dignity of Julius Piso should be impeached ; as little is it to be collected from any thing contained in this letter, or Trajan's answer. The adjective *reliqua* being added to *dignitas*, removes every suspicion of its signifying *honour* (as the ingenious French translator Mons. de Sacy, and his humble copier the Italian Tedeschi, have rendered it), for honour scarce admits of fractions, and there can be no remainder after a subtraction of that kind. The truth, it should seem, is, that as the value of a man's estate was, among the Romans, a necessary qualification to render him capable of the dignities of the commonwealth, our author, by a figure of speech, puts *dignitas* for *facultas* ; the consequent (to speak in the language of the grammarians) for the antecedent.

Epist. CXIII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE Pompeian law, Sir, which is observed in Pontus and Bithynia, does not direct that any money should be given by those who are elected into the public council by the censors. It has however been usual for such members as have been admitted into those assemblies, in pursuance of the privilege which you were pleased to grant to some particular cities, of receiving above their legal number, to pay one or two thousand denarii. Subsequent to this, the Proconsul Anicius Maximus ordained (though indeed his edict extended to some few cities only), that those who were elected by the censors should also pay into the treasury a certain sum, which varied in different places. It remains therefore for your consideration, whether it would not be proper to settle a certain fixed sum for each member, who is elected into the council, to pay upon his entrance; for it well becomes you, whose every word and action deserves immortality, to give laws that shall for ever be permanent.

Epist. CXIV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Can give no general directions applicable to all the cities of Bithynia, whether those who are made members of their respective councils shall pay an honorary fee upon their admittance, or not. It seems best therefore, in this case, (what indeed upon all occasions is the safest way), to leave each city to its respective laws. But I think, however, that the censors ought to set the sum lower to those who are chosen into the senate

nate contrary to their inclinations, than to the rest.

Epist. CXV. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE Pompeian law, Sir, allows the Bithynians to give the freedom of their respective cities to whatever persons they think proper, provided they are not foreigners, but belong to some of the cities of this province. The same law specifies the particular causes for which the censors may expel any member the senate; amongst which number, that of being a foreigner is not mentioned. Certain of the censors therefore have desired my sentiments, whether they ought to expel a member if he should happen to be a foreigner. But I thought it necessary to receive your instructions in this case; not only because the law, though it forbids foreigners to be admitted citizens, does not direct a senator to be expelled for the same reason, but because I am informed, that there is in every city several members of their council who are in these circumstances. If therefore this clause of the law, which seems to be antiquated by a long custom to the contrary, should be enforced, many cities, as well as private persons, will be thrown into great confusion. I have subjoined the heads of this law to my letter.

Epist. CXVI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU might very reasonably, my dear Pliny, be doubtful what decision to give to the inquiry of the censors; whether they might elect into the senate, foreign citizens, though of the same province? The authority of law on one side, and long custom prevailing against it on the

other, might well throw you into a state of suspense. The proper mean to observe in this case, will be, to make no change in what is past, but to suffer those senators who are already elected, though contrary to law, to keep their seats, to whatever city they may belong; in all future elections, however, to pursue the directions of the Pompeian law: for to extend its influence backwards, must necessarily introduce great confusion.

Epist. CXVII. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

IT is customary here upon any person's taking the manly robe, solemnizing his marriage, entering upon the office of a magistrate, or dedicating any public work, to invite the whole senate, together with a considerable part of the commonalty, and distribute to each of the company one or two denarii. I beg you would inform me, whether you think proper this ceremony should be observed, or how far you approve of it. For myself, though I am of opinion that upon some occasions, especially those of public festivals, this kind of invitations may be permitted; yet when they are carried so far as to draw together a thousand persons, and sometimes more, it is going, I fear, beyond a reasonable number, and has something the appearance of ambitious largesses.

Epist. CXVIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IT is with justice you apprehend, that those public invitations, which extend to an unreasonable number of people, and where the dole is distributed, not singly to a few acquaintance, but as it were to whole collective bodies, may be
turned

turned to the turbulent purposes of ambition. But I have made choice of your prudence, in the persuasion that you would take proper measures for regulating the manners and settling the peace of this province.

Epist. CXIX. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

THE athletic victors, Sir, in the * *Iselastic* games, think they ought to receive the prize you have established for the conquerors at those combats on the day they are crowned: for it is not at all material, they say, what time they were triumphantly conducted into their country, but when they merited that honour by their conquest. On the contray, when I consider the meaning of the term *Iselastic*, I am strongly inclined to believe, that the time of their public entry is to be alone considered. They likewise petition to be allowed the prize you give at those combats which you have made *Iselastic*, though they were conquerors before that establishment took place: for it is but reasonable, they assert, that they should receive their rewards in this case, as they are deprived of them at those games which have been divested of the honour of being *Iselastic*, since their victories. But I am extremely doubtful, whether a retrospect should be

* These games are called *Iselastic*, from the Greek word *εισελασινω*, *invebor*, because the victors, drawn by white horses, and wearing crowns on their heads, were conducted with great pomp into their respective cities, which they entered through a breach in the walls made for that purpose; intimating, as Plutarch observes, that a city which produced such able and victorious citizens, had little occasion for the defence of walls. [*Catanæus.*] They received also annually a certain honourable stipend from the public.

admitted in this case, and a reward given to which they had no right at the time they gained the victory. I beg therefore you would be pleased to direct my judgment in these points, by explaining the intention of your own benefactions.

Epist. CXX. TRAJAN to PLEINY.

THE reward proposed to the conqueror in the Iselastie games, is not, I think, due till he makes his public entry into his city. Nor at those combats which I have thought proper to make Iselastie, ought the prizes to be extended backwards to those who conquered there before that alteration took place. As to the plea which these athletic combatants urge, that they ought to receive the Iselastie prize at those combats which have been made Iselastie after their conquests, as they are denied it in the same case where the games have ceased to be so; it proves nothing in their favour: since, notwithstanding any change which has been made relating to these games, they are not called upon to return the recompense which they received prior to such alteration.

Epist. CXXI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Have never, Sir, accommodated any person with an order for post-chaises, or made use of them upon any occasion but in your affairs. I find myself however at present under a sort of necessity of breaking through this fixed rule. My wife having received an account of her * grandfather's death, and being desirous to wait upon her † aunt with all possible expedition, I

* Fabatus.

† Hispulla.

thought

thought it would be unkind to deny her the use of this privilege; as the grace of so tender an office consists in the early discharge of it, and as I well knew a journey which was founded in filial piety, could not fail of your approbation. I should think myself highly ungrateful therefore, were I to dissemble, that, among other great obligations which I owe to your indulgence, I have this in particular, that in confidence of your favour I have ventured to do without consulting you, what would have been too late had I waited for your consent.

Epist. CXXII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU did me justice, my dear Pliny, by confiding in my affection towards you. Without doubt, if you had waited for my consent to forward your wife in her journey by means of those warrants which I have intrusted to your care, the use of them would not have answered your purpose; since it was proper this visit to her aunt should have the additional recommendation, of being paid with all possible expedition.

T H E E N D.



Edinburgh, Oct. 20. 1762.

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